

VIDEO

\$2.50 MAY 1990

SUMMER SPECIAL:
ADVENTURES
IN SHOOTING

magazine

CAMCORDERS

- Roundup & Survival Kit
- Shooting Tips
From Top Pros
- How To Tape
Vacations

VIDEO TOMORROW

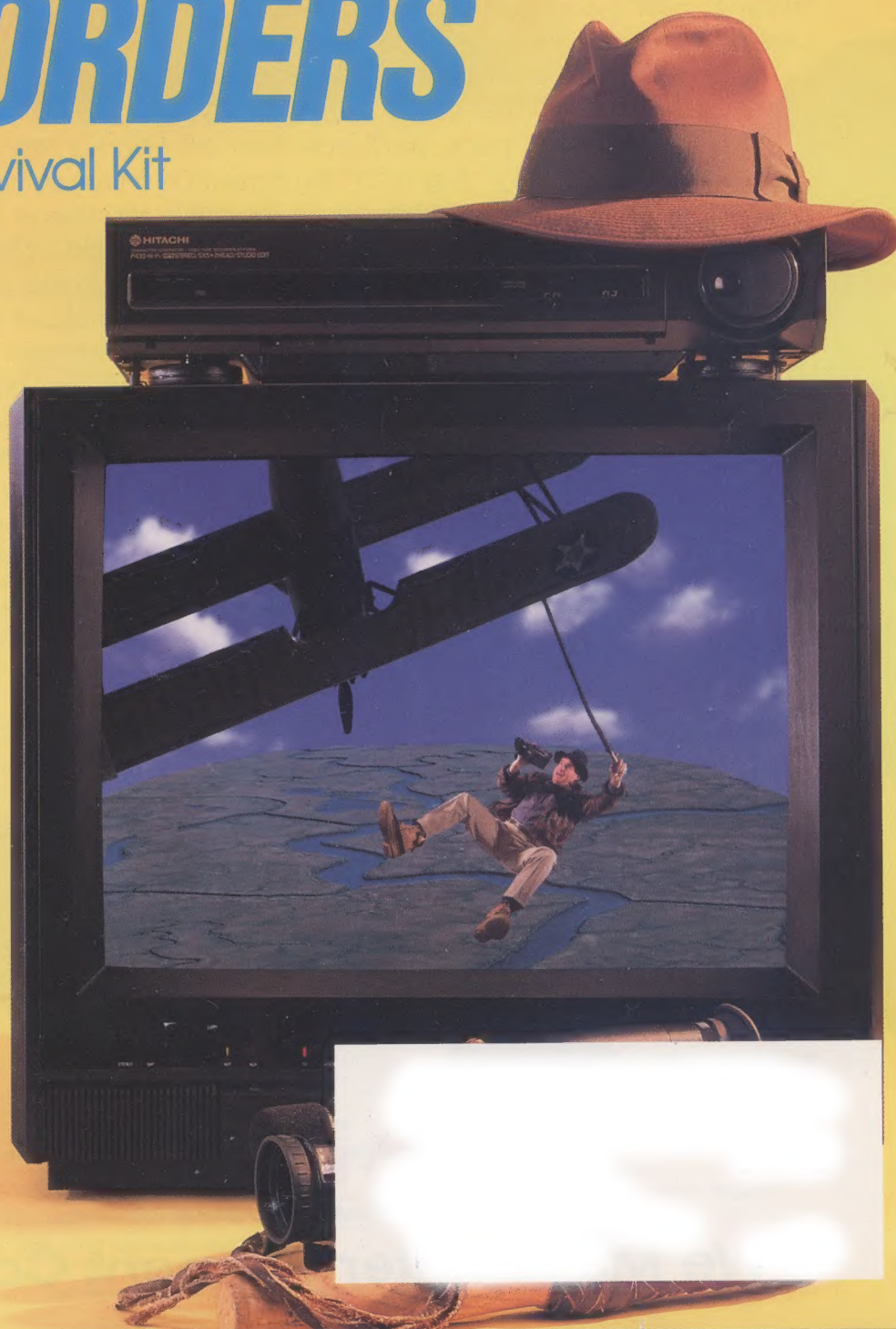
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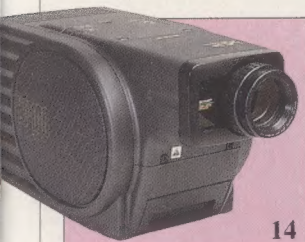
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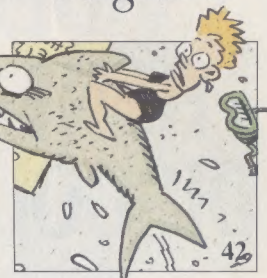
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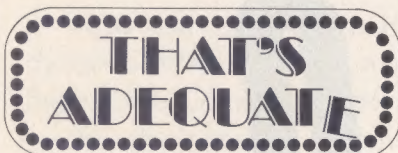
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Summer dreams: an
adventurous vacation
and a camcorder to
bring it back on tape.
Photograph by Vittorio
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Video Magazine
Volume XIV
Number 2

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CHANNEL ONE

Camcorders' new focus

To many video enthusiasts, the camcorder is little more than a novelty spin-off of VCR technology. Making a tape of Billy's birthday party may be nice, but true bliss for a hardcore videophile is born of active involvement with advanced home VCR equipment.

Yet increasingly the camcorder arena is being used as the proving ground for new VCR technologies and marketing tactics, and the results could determine the future of home machines as well. Behind all this, of course, is Sony's determination to establish the 8mm format as a major force in tomorrow's VCR universe—and VHS developer JVC's determination not to let it happen.

Sony has used the explosive camcorder market as a wedge in its overall strategy to popularize 8mm. Its sophisticated subcompact TR5 model—introduced in the U.S. last summer—is a smash success, and breakthroughs which made the TR5 model possible will quickly find their way into home and personal 8mm video products.

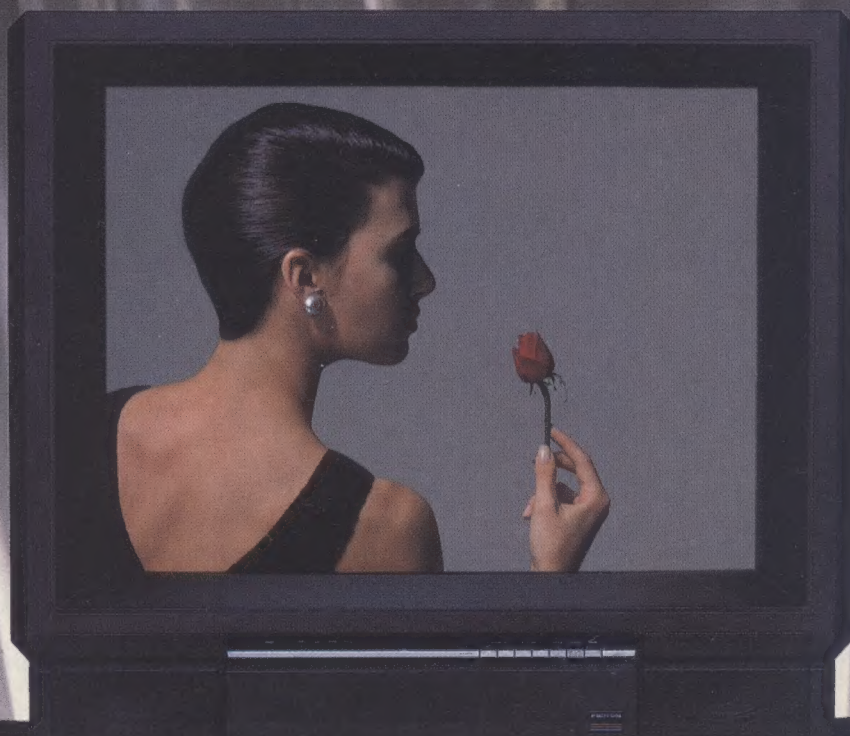
Now JVC and Panasonic are charging back with itty-bitty feature-laden VHS-C camcorders, both using new superminiaturized mechanisms. JVC will follow with its version of personal video, the tiny Concept C VHS system unveiled last summer in prototype form. And soon JVC will offer a combination VHS/VHS-C home deck that will play the small "C" tapes without an adapter.

Back to 8mm. Though Thomson Consumer Electronics denies it, Japan is rife with rumors that the firm will soon introduce an RCA brand 8mm camcorder. RCA's vast distribution network effectively put VHS on the map ten years ago, and a decision to add 8mm to its camcorder lineup would be significant.

Meanwhile, Sony says it has developed digital signal processing circuits which will be incorporated into 8mm camcorders in several years. That obviously will lead to further camcorder size and weight reductions, and to significantly improved performance. More importantly, digital advances will exert enormous influence on future home equipment. And you can bet JVC and other VHS makers have similar digital plans on the horizon.

So keep on enjoying that prized home VCR system—but keep your eye on the camcorder.

Art Levis
Editor-in-Chief



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FEEDBACK

The price is not right

In the old days (1982 to '88), most laserdiscs cost \$24.99 to \$34.99. Anything more was usually a blockbuster movie or a CAV collector's edition (excluding Criterion and Optical Data Corporation discs). At the same time, videotape versions of the same films cost \$89.95. Consumers sidestepped these high prices by renting instead of buying.

Thanks to public acceptance of the compact disc, laserdiscs are finally getting the recognition they deserve. A couple of companies see this as a way to make a buck. As a result, the price for a lot of their ho-hum releases is \$39.95. One of laserdisc's strengths has always been its price. *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* at \$29.95 is a great price. *Skin Deep* at \$39.95 is a slap in the face.

Robert John Casares
San Antonio, Texas

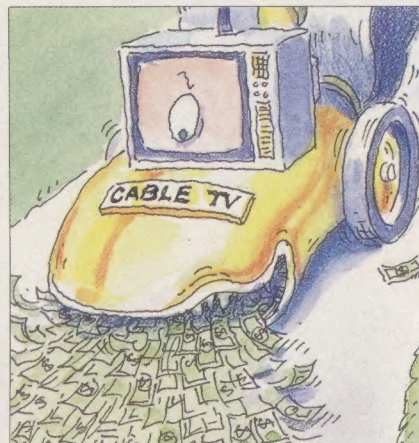
Speed crunch

Thomas Brogan brought up an interesting point in "Feedback" (March '90). As the owner of a Super VHS machine I, too, was upset at the absence of an LP speed, especially since one S-VHS cassette costs about \$12. I cannot afford constantly to spend that much money on one cassette to a) record one movie in SP, or b) record in EP and get the same quality recording I can get at the SP speed in VHS for a much cheaper price. When one takes into account how much an S-VHS VCR costs, the least manufacturers can do is include a feature we want and are already used to having.

Action Vasquez
The Bronx, N.Y.

Rate rape

Your article "Cable in Crisis" (Feb. '90) is dead on. The cable system in this area was sold and we were hit with a 100 percent rate increase, which makes basic cable cost almost three times what I pay



for garbage removal and recycling. How can the government allow cable services to operate with no competition or regulation? We should have better broadcast TV or at least a choice of cable systems to deal with, preferably including ones that do not threaten late charges if you don't pay your bill in advance, as mine does.

Ted Gladstone
El Granada, Calif.

Out for the count

Using an uninterruptable power supply for a VCR during a power blackout (see "Technically Speaking," Feb. '90) does no good when the VCR depends upon a cable system which also goes down in a power failure. All one can record is the "no signal" signal on the dead cable.

Phil Cavallo
Chicago, Ill.

Super slight

Your list of best products for 1989 ("Year's Best," Jan. '90) doesn't even include a full-size Super VHS camcorder. Come on! Full-size camcorders are still the most popular, by far. Your readers are well aware of the differences between VHS and S-VHS. As I see it, you are inadvertently adding fuel to the burning mystery of why S-VHS is taking so long to "take off." Many readers will misinterpret your omission as an indication that you believe S-VHS is somehow inferior.

James R. Holt
Cincinnati, Ohio

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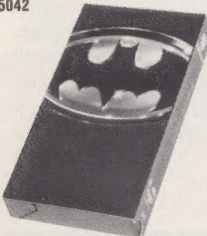
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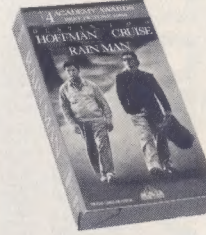


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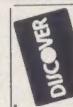
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FEEDBACK

Loyalist's lament

Video Magazine leaves Beta owners out in the cold. It appears that all the manufacturers, including Sony, have forsaken us. Blank Beta tape has become hard to find, and VHS is still in the Dark Ages as far as I'm concerned. Beta is still the best and I will never switch.

William Perkins
Arvin, Calif.

Hold that dream

I agree with Art Levis' "Six Dreams for the '90s" ("Channel One," Jan. '90), except for one—that we should do everything possible to make Super VHS the VCR standard. Let's not make the same mistake we made a decade ago when we rejected the superior Beta format. We again have a format that is superior on every count to VHS—Hi8, at least until recordable chips come along to make all tape obsolete.

August Salemi
Atascadero, Calif.

Incompatible stereo

In your response to Darrell Morgan

("Feedback," March '90) about differences between the Canon A1 and the Sony CCD-V99 8mm camcorders, you state that "the Canon's stereo is incompatible with all other 8mm machines, which play back the A1's audio in mono." Does the term "8mm machines" include all 8mm VCRs? Eugene Lenz
Placentia, Calif.

Editor's Reply: Yes. Canon's AFM stereo consists of two audio tracks, rather than one, between the luminance and chrominance tracks. Canon is the only manufacturer with this type of stereo sound. It is delivered only through playback with the A1, and soon will be available on the A1 Mark II.

Escape hatch

I have never done a survey asking people why they go to the movies or why they rent particular tapes, but I imagine it's to escape the real world for a couple of hours. Is it possible that for one issue, as a test, your reviewers could view movies from a less cerebral viewpoint? No note taking, just sit back and watch movies as your readers do, then write what you feel.

John Valenti
Bend, Ore.

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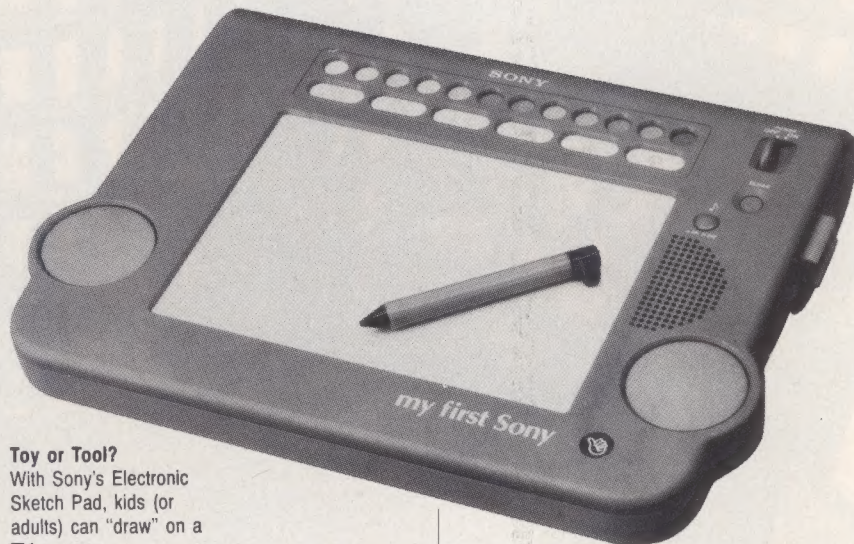
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EDITED BY BRENT BUTTERWORTH

LATE NEWS



Toy or Tool?

With Sony's Electronic Sketch Pad, kids (or adults) can "draw" on a TV screen.

A toy not just for kids

Sony is introducing a new toy that adult videophiles might enjoy as much as their children. The \$115 My First Sony Electronic Sketch Pad transfers the movements of a stylus across its face—creating pictures in up to 12 colors—to any TV set. Budding video artists can enhance their work using the pad's three line weights, 28 pattern stamps and electronic eraser.

LCD projectors— a new trend?

LCD projection technology—the compact big-screen alternative—is rapidly winning support among major TV manufacturers. Following the introduction of Sharp's XV-100 projector (see "Video-tests," this issue), Sony, Toshiba, Matsushita, Pioneer and Mitsubishi are reportedly gearing up to produce LCD projectors of their own. Epson and Sanyo showed prototypes. And Sharp will have its first competitor in the U.S. when JVC introduces its own LCD projector later this year.

'Satellite cable' to start in 1993

A new company called Sky Cable plans to broadcast up to 108 satellite TV

channels that can be picked up on 12-inch-square flat antennas. Sky Cable says the smaller antennas can be used because it will be sending digital video signals using new high-powered satellites. This is no entrepreneurial pipe dream, either—Sky Cable is jointly owned by NBC, Cablevision Systems, Hughes Communications and media mogul Rupert Murdoch.

Sky Cable plans to offer free basic service, several subscription channels and pay-per-view starting in 1993. Although the company has yet to nail down specific programming, it expects to duplicate some already available through cable (such as HBO and Showtime), and add sports and news coverage and other national and regional channels.

Sony creates chip for digital 8mm

A new one-chip digital video processor developed by Sony could revolutionize the camcorder field by leading to smaller, better 8mm camcorders. The company says its new chip would cut camcorder power consumption by 20 percent, and slice the number of parts in an average camcorder from 700 to 200. Sony also says the new technology would outperform Super VHS, and deliver CD-quality digital sound. However, the company does not plan any product introductions using the chip for at least a few years.

CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS



"Great Filmmaking. No film this year has kept me more glued to my seat."

Mike Clark/USA Today

"A brilliant comedy with laughs out of Annie Hall... This is a great film."

Joel Siegel/Good Morning America

"One of the very best movies Woody Allen has ever made."

Roger Ebert/Chicago Sun Times

"Crimes and Misdemeanors is stylish. It's intelligent. It's also hilarious... one of Woody Allen's finest."

Rex Reed/At The Movies

"Potently funny and powerfully moving... 'Crimes and Misdemeanors' is so funny it hurts."

Peter Travers/Rolling Stone

"'Crimes and Misdemeanors' mixes good and evil... the result is a tension that makes this a most affecting movie. Allen whipsaws you between dismay and laughter."

Jack Kroll/Newsweek

"Mr. Allen's most securely serious and funny films to date."

Vincent Canby/New York Times

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GAZETTE



Pacino returns in 'Sea of Love'

"One of the things I look for in a script," says Al Pacino, "is the dilemma in a character." After the disastrous reviews and commercial failure of 1985's *Revolution*, a more germane dilemma was how one of America's finest actors could regain his momentum as a movie star. Despite a long and distinguished career in such films as *Scarface*, *Serpico*, *The Godfather* and *Dog Day Afternoon*, Pacino had lost his box office power. Following *Revolution* (which he defends only to the point of saying, "I thought there were some interesting scenes"), he returned, as he often has, to his first love— theater. He appeared in an off-Broadway production of *Julius Caesar* and developed various projects, including an experimental film of a play called *The Local Stigmatic*.

It took the sexy police thriller *Sea of Love* (MCA Home Video) to reintroduce Pacino to the movie-going (and video-renting) masses. The New York native, now 50, brings believable maturity to the role of a lonely, rumpled detective who foolishly falls in love with the prime suspect (played by Ellen Barkin) in the murder case he's investigating.



Down the Hatch: Al Pacino (left and with Ellen Barkin, above) peers through an alcoholic haze in *Sea of Love*.

interest in his life, and Freud says work and love are all there is. He needs love, communication with someone."

The script by noted Bronx novelist Richard Price gives *Sea of Love* a convincing dose of contemporary New York culture. But why would a smart New York cop repeatedly open an apartment door without knowing who's outside? "We shot in Canada, where things are different," Pacino quips.

—Ira Robbins

Wes Craven spills his guts

No one knows better than director Wes Craven that many low- and mid-budget horror films seem almost preordained for lofty "cult" status—his own catalogue includes such all-time favorites as *The Hills Have Eyes*, *Last House on the Left* and *A Nightmare on Elm Street*. And his latest creation, *Shocker* (MCA Home Video), earned \$15 million at the box office. "It's the rollercoaster theory," Craven says of the genre's peculiar appeal. "In a sense, horror films exorcise fear and doubt in our subconscious—they bring them out in an entertaining

Video Flashes

The Baby Vanishes. A lot of people were thrilled when Turner Home Entertainment released *Bringing Up Baby*, the classic screwball comedy starring Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn, on videocassette last September. But if you want your own copy, you'd better buy it quick. Turner recently discovered that it owns only the broadcast rights to the film, not the video rights, and has had to withdraw the tape from its catalogue. At presstime, copies were still available at a variety of video specialty stores across the country.



Disappearing Act: Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn in *Bringing Up Baby*.



Scaremaster: Director Wes Craven has developed a loyal audience for his graphic horror films.

manner and resolve them."

But not all horror films strike the right chord with connoisseurs. "The classic cult films exceed the others in both ferocity and uniqueness," Craven explains. "In all modesty, I'd say this about some of my films, like *Nightmare* and *Last House*. The villainy and violence are without restrictions. It's a misconception to think they're terribly explicit or gross—rather, they have tremendous energy. There's an unabashed quality to the evil."

While today's audiences seek films that are completely new, they also want subject matter and environments that are familiar. "The trick is to combine the two," Craven says. "We deal with things that are buried in the audience's psyche, but we put them in a dressing that appears fresh. There's nothing new under the sun, but there are new packages to put them in."

—Clifford Meth

TV classics come home on cassette

In the ten years since video exploded into American households, cassettes of all types have found their niche among ever-growing audiences. Ironically, shows originally made for television have remained largely unavailable on tape, if only because video stores are ill-equipped to handle large sets devoted exclusively to individual programs.

The CBS Video Library, however, has taken matters into its own hands. With its direct mail-order system and special collectors' series ranging from *The Beverly Hillbillies* to *The Twilight Zone*, the company has reached a loyal core of viewers longing for the good old days of series television.

The latest addition to the CBS Library, *Gunsmoke: The Collector's Edition*, comprises 20 cassettes—one for each year of the long-running series. Fans of the show will rejoice not only in the uncut versions of the series' one-hour color episodes, but in the 30-minute black & white shows from *Gunsmoke's* first five seasons. Volume One features

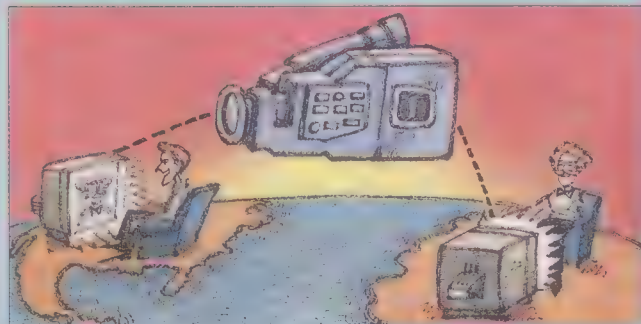
"Matt Gets It," the series' 1955 debut, complete with an introduction by a still-lean and handsome John Wayne. Included on the tape is "The Killer," which stars Charles Bronson in the title role.

Also available are cassette libraries devoted to *Star Trek*, *Bonanza*, *The Outer Limits*, *I Love Lucy* and *Faerie Tale Theatre*. Two new series, *I Spy* and *Burns and Allen*, are scheduled for future release. All sets are \$4.95 for the first tape and \$24.95 or \$29.95 for all subsequent volumes. For orders and information, contact the CBS Video Library at 800-544-4431.

—Bruce Eder



Flight Fright: William Shatner and friend in *The Twilight Zone's* "Nightmare at 20,000 Feet" episode.



Cams Across the Water. Videophiles from all over the world may soon be communicating with a truly universal language—pictures. Array Communications of Orange County, Calif., has established a service called Video-Pals that links camcorder users from around the country and the globe. The company has already contacted officials in East Germany, Romania, Poland and the Soviet Union to promote participation in the program. For \$29.95, you'll get an appropriate match for video correspondence, plus a quarterly newsletter. Call 800-Vid-Pals for further information; California residents call 714-997-8121.

Help Is on the Way. Do you need help resolving an equipment-related problem or dispute? The Electronic Industries Association (EIA)—which represents major manufacturers of video, audio, computer and other electronic equipment—wants to help. For 17 years, its consumer affairs department has handled customer complaints. The association asks that you first try to solve all problems through your local retailer or service center, then contact manufacturers directly if required. If you believe a manufacturer has not adequately investigated the problem, or is taking too long to respond, call the EIA at 202-457-4977.

Whittle While You Wait. Whittle Communications stirred tremendous controversy last year with its plan to provide video equipment and programming to public schools in exchange for the right to show commercials to captive (and impressionable) audiences. Now the company is back with another scheme—Waiting Room Television (WRTV). Up to 100 medical waiting rooms across the country are being equipped to receive the satellite-delivered network as part of the system's inaugural test run. If it succeeds, expect to see it in 100,000 of the country's largest waiting rooms next year. Whittle hopes to reach 30 million adults per week with WRTV, and to earn \$100 million in advertising revenues.

VIDEOTESTS



Portable Projector:
Sharp's XV-100 projects images up to 100 inches on any flat white surface.

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 536

Sharp LCD video projector

Although several manufacturers have demonstrated LCD video projectors, the Sharp XV-100 is the only one on the market. (The Kodak LC500 we tested in February '89 has been discontinued.) In the future, LCD technology may become the high-performance projection

standard. But for now, the big advantage of LCD projectors is their portability.

At 31 pounds, the XV-100 is certainly totable. The only limitation on its portability is that it requires 120 VAC. When placed slightly further than 15 feet from the screen, it produces images as large as 100 inches diagonally. The zoom lens can shrink the image to 50 inches, which increases brightness. At 6.5 feet from the screen, the XV-100 can create 20- to 40-inch images.

LCD projectors need only one lens, so the convergence of the red, green and

blue primary images can be set at the factory. As a result, LCD projectors show none of the color fringing typical of CRT models. With only one lens, no cathode ray tubes, and a small power supply, the machines are light and compact.

The XV-100 has two video inputs. Input 1 has both video and S-video jacks. Plugging in an S-cable disables input 1's video jacks. A monitor output feeds the selected signal to a second device, but doesn't work with S-video signals. Like most other front projectors, the XV-100 contains no audio circuitry or tuner, so a user must supply an audio system, and must connect a tuner to watch broadcast TV. A 100-inch beaded screen with a gain of 2.5 comes with the projector. The only controls are two power switches, the input selector and the picture controls.

Description. The black XV-100 is 17 inches deep. The lens and cowl project about six inches further from the top of one end. A retractable handle at the bottom front makes the unit easy to carry. A ring on the front of the lens focuses the image. Another ring works the zoom, which covers about a two-to-one ratio.

The sides are bare but for a filtered air intake that is well-camouflaged. The bottom has a pair of adjustable feet near the front and a slot near the right side for the air filter, which can be removed and vacuumed. At the back are the power cord, a power switch, a cooling

Sharp XV-100 LCD Projector

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$5,299

Weight:
30.9 pounds

Dimensions:
10 x 9-7/8 x 23-3/8 inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power Consumption:
220 W

Screen Size:

20 to 100 inches, depending on distance from screen

Video Inputs:

2, RCA-type pin jacks

S-Video Input:

1, priority over video 1 input when connected

Video Output:

1, monitor (no audio out)

Absent Features:

audio, tuner, remote control

Accessories:

beaded screen, lens cover, air filter and extra-long video cable

RESULTS

Horiz. Resolution:
280-290 lines

Snowiness;
Luminance S/N:
approx. 53 dB

Accuracy of Colors:

good to very good with slight tendency toward green

Chroma AM S/N:
approx. 62 dB

Chroma PM S/N:
approx. 62 dB

Color Temperature:
5600 Kelvin

Peak Brightness:

116 footlamberts, unity gain screen

RATINGS

Picture Quality:
excellent for an LCD projector

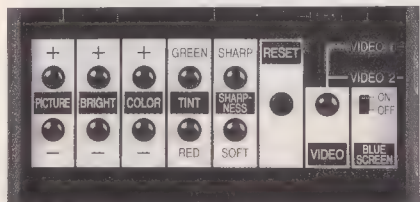
Operational Ease:
excellent

Overall Performance:
excellent

fan exhaust, and jacks for S-video 1, video 1, video 2 and monitor out. Most other controls are in a compartment on the top.

Outside this compartment is a push-button lamp power switch and indicator lights for power, lamp, video 1 and video 2, plus lamp and temperature warning lights. The control compartment has a slide switch for blue screen on/off, buttons for source selection and picture reset, plus/minus button pairs for picture, brightness and color, and button pairs for red/green tint and sharp/soft detail. There are no provisions for a remote.

Operation. Using the projector is



Back to Basics: Because it has no tuner or audio, the XV-100 requires only a few picture controls.

so simple that it can be hooked up and played in the dark. The power and video signal cables are all that need to be connected since there is no audio. Turning on the master power switch at the back lights an indicator on the top. Pressing the lamp power switch turns on the lamp, the fan, and indicators for the lamp and video source.

A button in the control compartment switches between video 1 and video 2 inputs. A slide switch determines whether the screen will be blue or black when there is no signal. The button pairs adjust picture, brightness, color, tint and sharpness, while the reset button returns adjustments to factory settings.

Focusing the image and zooming it to fill the screen are the only other adjustments. The projector uses either the supplied screen or any light, flat surface—curved screens are not recommended. Image size can be altered either by zooming or changing the distance between projector and screen. Screen brightness varies with image size and screen reflectance. The filter should be cleaned after every 100 hours of use. Ease of setup and operation are excellent.

continued on page 84

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 537

Minolta Compact VHS camcorder

Minolta designs and builds its own Compact VHS camcorders, so it is no surprise that the Master Series-C 51 resembles only its Minolta predecessor. It is designed for easy operation—the camera controls are uncrowded and distinguishable by touch with confirming viewfinder legends. Combined with automatic circuitry, the design delivers point-and-shoot ease. The Series-C 51 is a lot like the previous Series-C 50, but Minolta gave its new camcorder a tele-macro focus range, a flying erase head, and video and audio dub—and lowered the price by over \$200.

Switching off the auto exposure or white balance locks these controls at their current positions, so to a large extent what you see in the black & white viewfinder is what you get. The unusual but very convenient telemacro mode offers continuous focus down to the surface of the lens. This lets a user shoot small objects yet stay far enough away to light them correctly. There is no manual focus option, but when the autofocus is deactivated, the zoom rocker becomes a power focus rocker. Fade-to-white, a 1/1000-second shutter, and a date/time imprinter contribute to convenience.

The camcorder includes an interval timer with three intervals to 60 seconds, plus a self-timer that records either a burst or continuously. The flying erase

head and the video dub option allow replacement of the picture with new footage shot through the lens. Audio dub replaces the soundtrack with audio from the microphone or an external mic jack. This is not just a point-and-shoot camcorder—it has a good range of creative options supported by a wealth of optional accessories.

Description. The Series-C 51 is styled in a warm gray and black with touches of color in logos and buttons. Its controls are arranged in four groups: camera run/stop and zoom controls on the handgrip, main camera controls on the left side, recorder and general controls on the rear panel and subsidiary controls below the viewfinder.

The camera controls on the left consist of distinctive buttons for fade, auto exposure lock, autofocus, date/time, telemacro, white balance lock and the 1/1000-second shutter.

On the rear panel, the blue eject slider is at the top with the audio dub buttons beside it. Underneath these controls are buttons for stop, pause, rewind, play and fast forward. Below these sit the monitor button, which turns on only the viewfinder electronics but not the transport, and review/sync dub, which is black with a yellow center. At the bottom lie the power slider and record buttons. The controls on the top consist of buttons for date/time select

text continued on page 90

chart on page 89

Locked Up:

Both iris and white balance on the Series-C 51 can be locked.



VIDEOTESTS

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 538

JVC Super VHS camcorder

Since the introduction of Super VHS, JVC has offered more Super VHS-Compact camcorders than full-sized S-VHS models. The GF-S550 is one of those few S-VHS camcorders. Of course, it features the attendant improvement in picture quality, but it does not have hi-fi

stereo audio, only linear mono. However, it does have a long list of options that should add polish to your home productions.

The GF-S550 has an S-video output and an A/V input and output, but no S-VHS input. It records and plays only at the SP speed, with 5x playback search and edit search. There's also review, which shows the last few seconds of a previous take. A double-azimuth four-head system produces very small noise



Maxi-Cam: The JVC GF-S550 features Super VHS, a flying erase head and audio/video dubbing.

bars in search, along with noise-free stills.

Frame advance and a flying erase head allow precise assemble editing and insert recording. Supplied with the camcorder is a title/graphic easel for two-by-two-inch slides or two-by-three-inch opaque artwork. These can be captured on four pages of digital memory and superimposed on a picture in any of eight colors, normal or reversed.

Audio dubbing lets a user replace original audio. A background music jack allows connection to a Walkman or other sound source, so that background sound can be added while the original recording is in progress. This means that you don't lose a generation just to add music; but adding music to the original can make editing tricky. A limited animation capability provides bursts of one-quarter, one-half and one second at

JVC GF-S550 S-VHS Camcorder

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$2,299

Weight:
5.5 pounds without
battery or tape

Dimensions:
8-3/8 x 5-1/4 x 15-3/4
inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
9.6 VDC

Image Sensor:
1/2-inch CCD with
330,000 pixels, effective

Lens:
f/1.4-2.2, 8x (8.5-68
mm) two-speed power
zoom with macro range

Filter Diameter: 52mm

**Minimum Focusing
Distance:** 3.6 feet

Autofocus:
image-sensing type,
switchable to manual

Minimum Illumination:
rated—7 lux; measured—
7.4 lux for 50 IRE

Iris: center-weighted
auto with BLC and
manual override

Sensitivity:
7-100,000 lux

Auto Fade: audio/video
Shutter Speeds:
1/1000, 1/500, 1/250
and 1/60 second

Viewfinder:
0.7-inch CRT with on-
screen indicators for
standby, record, index,
animation, title color, ti-
tle page, date, time,
auto date, elapsed
time, white balance
mode, focus mode,
shutter speed, fader,
low battery, low clock

battery, low light and
low contrast

Jacks:
viewfinder, external mic
and mic power, S-video
out, A/V in/out, remote,
earphone, background
music in and DC power

VCR Controls:
eject, record, rewind/
search, play, fast for-
ward/search, audio dub,
stop, pause/still, insert
record and edit start

Microphone:
unidirectional electret
condenser

Tape Formats:
S-VHS, VHS

Tape Speed: SP

Video Heads: 4

Cue & Review/Search: 5x

**Fast Forward/
Rewind Time:**
4-1/4 min. for T-120

Remote:
wired—pause only or
RM-V15U with buttons
for power, edit, VISS,
audio dub, insert re-
cord, record, pause/still,
rewind/search, play, fast
forward/search, stop,
animation and cam-
corder start/stop

Linear Audio: mono

Special Features:
auto white balance with
lock, still frame, frame
advance, remote pause,
separate eject, counter
memory, audio dub, in-
sert edit

Absent Features:
slow motion, speed
play, visible fast for-
ward/rewind, video dub,
auto rewind, hi-fi AFM
audio

Accessories:
supplied—45-min. bat-
tery pack, AC adapter/

charger, RF converter,
S-video cable, A/V out-
put cable, S-VHS
cassette, handle, shoul-
der strap, lithium clock
battery and title easel

RESULTS

Horizontal Resolution:
VCR—400 lines,
S-VHS; 240 lines, VHS;
camera—350 lines

**Luminance S/N,
Unweighted:**
S-VHS—49.3 dB

**Luminance S/N,
Weighted:**
S-VHS—55.2 dB

**Video S/N,
Unweighted:**
S-VHS—46.8 dB;
VHS—45.3 dB

Video S/N, Weighted:
S-VHS—53.8 dB;
VHS—52.4 dB

Chroma AM S/N:

S-VHS—47.7 dB;
VHS—47.2 dB

Chroma PM S/N:
S-VHS—41.9 dB;
VHS—42.1 dB

**Audio Frequency
Response:**
linear—75 Hz-10 kHz,
+1.1/-3 dB

Audio S/N:
43.4 dB

Audio Distortion:
1.2%

RATINGS

Picture Quality:
very good/excellent

Audio Quality:
excellent for linear
track, no hi-fi

Operational Ease:
very good

Overall Performance:
very good



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PV-510 \$748
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each trigger press. A master edit control system communicates with designated JVC VCRs.

The camera features a high resolution CCD image sensor, auto everything with manual overrides, a two-speed 8x zoom, four shutter speeds down to 1/1000-second, an audio/video fader, shuttle search, auto date and date/time select, a dual trigger system, an optional wired remote pause and full-function remote, and four superimposable pages of memory in eight colors with reverse.

Description. The GF-S550 is black except for white legends and a few colored buttons. Like most VHS camcorders, it is a heavyweight, at 5.5 pounds without battery or cassette. JVC supplies a 45-minute battery; optional batteries run for 20, 45 or 60 minutes and charge in 50, 70 and 80 minutes, respectively. The overall shape is boxy, with flat sides and a bulge for the handgrip. The viewfinder swings forward over the lens to keep carrying and storage width to a minimum.

Controls on the handgrip include a zoom rocker, a run/stop button and a slide switch for the recording alarm, which sounds each time the run/stop button is pressed. VCR controls occupy the back, and camera controls cover the left of the camera projection. Frequently used controls are exposed and seldom-used ones hide under a sliding cover.

On the left side of the camera are a slider for power with an indicator light, and exposed buttons for focus, fader, backlight compensation (BLC), date/time record, VISS, shutter speed, full auto, quick review and edit search. The covered camera control compartment has a slide switch for record time and buttons for record time reset, white balance, display select, and date/time select and set.

There are also buttons for title on/off, page, image reverse, color and memory. The lens has manual focus and zoom rings with a blue release for the macro focus range on the front of the stubby zoom lever.

The electronic viewfinder sprouts from the top of the camera section, and plugs into a jack on the left side. The viewing hood swings 180 degrees from straight up to straight down for convenient angle shooting. The hood and one magnifier flip up for easy viewing away from the eye, and the remaining magnifier focuses the viewfinder image. The front of the EVF has a tally light, and its underside has screwdriver controls for electrical focus and brightness. The viewfinder slides outward for left eye viewing and can be removed by releasing a catch. Above it sit a fixed unidirectional microphone and jacks for an ex-

ternal mic and mic power.

At the top of the rear panel are a spring-loaded slider for eject, the record button and a slide switch for dubbing (edit) on/off. Below are an LCD display and buttons for counter reset and memory. A sliding cover conceals buttons for rewind/search, play, fast forward/search, audio dub, stop, pause/still, edit start, insert record and animation. Near the bottom of the rear panel are jacks for remote, an earphone, background music in, S-video out and A/V in/out.

At the very bottom is a carrying strap loop. The other is at the back of the top panel. The accessory shoe occupies the forward end of this panel. On the left of the recorder body is a cushioned cheek panel and a tiny tracking control.

Operation. Apart from its size and weight the camcorder is relatively easy to use. When both compartments are closed, the controls are easily managed. After touching the record button to put the camcorder into record pause mode, pushing the full auto button automates iris, focus and white balance. The white balance button selects between auto mode and three fixed modes; WB lock freezes the current setting. The focus button selects auto or manual mode. Features like auto fade, BLC, shutter speed select, VISS index write, review and retake (edit) search make shooting easier.

The recorder functions are mostly hidden in the back compartment. JVC added a few special controls—edit start, audio/video insert and animation (usable in both camera and VCR modes). All camera and recorder controls are self-explanatory or easily mastered with a little help from the manual. One convenience is the switchable run/stop trigger alarm, which helps prevent accidental shots of shoes and skies. The full remote is a major convenience, but we do miss S-video input, even though there is little call for it. Ease of operation is very good.

Performance. The horizontal resolution of the recorder section in S-VHS is 400 lines, but that of the camera section is only about 350 lines, so pictures recorded through the lens have about 350 lines of horizontal resolution when using S-VHS tape. With VHS tape, the horizontal resolution is only 240 lines.

The luminance signal-to-noise ratio at the S-video jack is 49.3 decibels unweighted and 55.2 dB weighted. The unweighted video S/N at the A/V output is 46.8 dB from S-VHS recordings and 45.3 dB from VHS recordings. The weighted video S/N at the A/V output is 53.8 dB from S-VHS and 52.4 dB from VHS. The chroma AM S/N is 47.7 dB

from S-VHS and 47.2 dB from VHS, while the chroma PM S/N is 41.9 dB from S-VHS and 42.1 dB from VHS. All these measurements are excellent except for chroma PM noise. The camera has a 7 lux low-light rating and requires 7.4 lux for a 50 IRE output. Overall picture quality is very good to excellent.

The recorder's failure to offer hi-fi is a distinct weakness since at least one S-VHS-C camcorder has it. The frequency response of the recorder's mono track is 75 Hertz to 10 kilohertz, +1.1/-3

dB, with an audio S/N of 43.4 dB and a total harmonic distortion of 1.2 percent.

Conclusion. The GF-S550 is predictably large. Its only real disappointment is the lack of hi-fi stereo. Video performance is very good/excellent and both linear audio and ease of operation are very good, for an overall rating of very good. Even the linear audio is enhanced by the optional background music feature. We recommend this camcorder highly. Its suggested price is \$2,299.

ADVERTISEMENT

January 18, 1990

Herrn Hellmuth Schmitt

West Germany

Dear Hellmuth:



What a year... it seems the world has changed in 1989 faster than during all the 18 years that we have known each other.

Nobody here in the USA believed that the BERLIN WALL would come down during our lifetime (except Mr. Bush who in his mind initiated it), and nobody was prepared for the incredible changes in Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and now Rumania. We are so very happy for you and your family in Dresden and not quite cynical enough not to be excited and full of hope that finally "we, the people" will succeed.

Actually, all these events have prompted me - against my frugal nature - to spend some money on a new VCR, although the old one is still intact. This amazing machine can actually play and record tapes from anywhere in the world. Now I can watch videos from Russia and France in SECAM and all PAL standards from West and East Europe here in America on my regular American TV-set. I tell you, it's fantastic. You know from your last visit how little American television shows us from abroad. Now I get information from any field I want, politics, economy and of course anything pertaining to my business. Anne loves that she can get her Italian opera tapes and the kids swear ~~xxxx~~ that English rock videos are far better than MTV.

I wish you would get one of these "Image Translator" VCRs for yourself. Then we could exchange video tapes instead of newspaper clippings or photos.

I am enclosing a photo of my VCR and in case you want to contact the manufacturer directly, here is their address:

INSTANT REPLAY, 2951 S. Bayshore Dr., Miami, FL 33133,
ph:(305) 448-7088, fax:(305) 445-1998.

I am sure you can write it off as a business expense, because it will be really useful in your office. Anyway we are looking forward to your visit next month. Please let us have your arrival time and Airline. Bring some of the videos you shot at Christina's wedding. Now, with my new VCR we can watch them together when you come.

Until soon, give my love
to Susie and the kids.

Love,
Michael

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VIDEOTESTS

VIDEOTEST NUMBER 539

Hitachi 46-inch TV

Hitachi is a leading manufacturer of projection TV tubes, but until recently, its own sets seemed to lag behind other sets using Hitachi tubes. However, the CU4600B projects a bright picture using a six-element glass lens with increased light transmission. The set's dual electromagnetic focus produces a very small beam for high horizontal resolution. A screen pitch of 0.85mm also increases the resolution, which is rated at 800 lines. Hitachi improved the image by emphasizing drops to black more than changes to white. This reduces blooming and halos around bright objects. Dynamic noise reduction reduces noise in dark areas of the picture.

On the audio side, it has a decoder for Dolby surround, hall and matrix effects, complete with five-watt amplifiers for the rear channels. The owner must supply the rear speakers.

The remote offers four pages of commands: basic control, full control, VCR and user (for auxiliary devices). Both the VCR and user pages can be programmed to control any equipment with infrared remote capability. The remote allows adjustment of all setup and operating functions except convergence, vertical hold, surround balance and S-video/video switching of input 1.

The rear jack pack provides an

Big Picture, Big Sound:

Hitachi's CU4600B 46-inch rear-projection TV features a surround sound decoder and amplifiers for rear speakers.



S-video jack (which shares input 1 with a composite jack), three audio/video inputs, one monitor output with fixed level, a variable level stereo output, connectors for two rear speakers, two RF inputs and an RF output for feeding a cable descrambler. A supplementary set of video 1 inputs sits in the front.

Description. The CU4600B's cabinet is black-finished oak with a char-

coal-gray speaker grille and a few touches of gold trim. When the set is off, the screen looks almost black. The bottom of the screen stands about 19 inches from the floor. The only exposed control is a power button with indicators for power, stereo and SAP. A door to its left conceals the other controls.

Behind the door reside input 1 jacks

Hitachi CU4600B 46-Inch Monitor/Receiver

DATA

Suggested Price:
\$3,000

Weight:
220 pounds

Dimensions:
48-3/8 x 42-1/2 x
26-1/2 (h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
120 VAC, 60 Hz

Power Consumption:
298 W

Screen Size:
46 inches, diagonally

Speaker Size:
6-inch woofer and
2-inch tweeter for each
front channel

Type of Tuning:
frequency synthesis

Method of Tuning:
programmable scan on
set; scan plus direct
access on remote

**Broadcast Tuning
Range:**
2 to 13, 14 to 69

Cable Tuning Range:
125 channels—2 to 13,
A-5 to A-1, A to I, J to
W, W+1 to W+28,
W+29 to W+84

Remote Control:
IR wireless with
switches for learn/use/

use with annunciator
and basic TV/full TV/
VTR/user pages; indica-
tors for ready and
learn, and buttons for
power, 10-digit keypad,
100+, channel up and
down, volume up and
down, mute, last chan-
nel, AVX source
switching, recall, and
12 additional buttons
for menu, picture mode,
audio mode, minus,
plus, antenna and SA
in full TV mode

**Video/Stereo Audio
Inputs:**
3, duplicate set with
priority on front panel
for input 1

S-Video Input:

1 with front panel dupli-
cate, manually
switchable, tied to vid-
eo 1 input

**Video/Stereo Audio
Output:**
1, displayed program
with fixed audio level

**Auxiliary Stereo
Audio Output:**
1, variable

**External Speaker
Connectors:**
only for rear surround
speakers

**Internal Audio
Amplifier Power:**
front—10 watts per
channel, rear—5 watts
per channel

Accessories:
remote control with bat-
teries, antenna
transformer, tool for ad-
justing vertical sync and
convergence in front
panel compartment

RESULTS

Horiz. Resolution:
rated—800 lines; mea-
sured—720 lines

**Snowiness;
Luminance S/N:**
50.3 dB

Chroma AM S/N:
53.6 dB

Chroma PM S/N:
51.1 dB

Accuracy of Colors:
excellent

**Audio Frequency
Response:**
front output—20 Hz-20
kHz, +0.1/-1.8 dB;
speakers—50 Hz-16
kHz

Audio S/N: 68.4 dB

**Total Harmonic
Distortion:** 1.8%

RATINGS

Picture Quality:
very good

Audio Quality:
very good with built-in
speakers

Operational Ease:
excellent/good

Overall Performance:
very good

for S-video, video and stereo audio at the far left. When these jacks are used the input 1 jacks on the rear panel are disconnected. A gold background to their right frames a button to turn on a cross hair test pattern and four rotary adjustments for horizontal and vertical convergence. Further to the right are rotary adjustments for vertical sync and stereo input balance (for surround sound extraction).

Controls to the right of the compartment include an adjustment tool in a storage hole, and buttons for S-video, antenna, menu, minus, plus, sound mode, picture mode, function, volume up and down and channel up and down. Menu, picture mode and sound mode buttons call up menus of adjustments to be made with plus, minus and the relevant button.

Furthest forward on the remote are the power button and indicators for ready and learn, followed by 12 buttons whose labels change according to the page selected. Closest to the user are a ten-digit keypad, and buttons for 100, last channel, AVX source switching, recall, mute volume up and down, and channel up and down. A slide switch on

the right side selects the command page and another on the back switches between learn, use and use with confirmation tones.

Operation. Using the TV is fairly straightforward. Connect one or more signal sources, and rear speakers if desired. Tuning, volume and source switching work like any other monitor/receiver. The menu button calls up nine setup options on two pages: air/cable, auto program, station memory, channel memory, time/date set, program list, off timer, channel scan and child lock. Most of these options have submenus.

The picture mode button calls up three pages of submenus, with adjustments for picture, color, tint, black level, sharpness, auto color, dynamic noise reduction, notch filter, reset, preference and preference set. Many of these selections have adjustment scales or other submenus, as do the audio adjustments.

Making simple adjustments may require a user to push many buttons. A further aggravation is that when the display disappears, the user must cycle through all the menus from the top to make a small change in the previous adjustment. However, adjustment steps

are small enough for fussy users.

Many manufacturers use similar menus to reduce the button count on the remote. Such a system is acceptable for those who rarely adjust picture or sound quality, but not for those who make frequent adjustments. The programmable pages are very useful for those who wish to reduce remote clutter. For general TV watching, ease of operation is excellent, but if you like to make frequent adjustments, the process varies from annoying to good.

Performance. The CU4600B is rated for 800 lines of horizontal resolution, which we verified to at least 720 lines from frequency sweep. Even though there is dynamic noise reduction, the luminance/video signal-to-noise ratio is 50.3 decibels and noise is visible in the picture. Remember, however, that as screen size increases noise disturbances are also magnified. Comparisons should be made with sets of the same size. The chroma AM S/N is 53.6 dB and the chroma PM S/N is 51.1 dB. Screen brightness is about 390 footlamberts with about a 20-degree vertical viewing angle. The picture remains

continued on page 84



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STATE OF THE ART

Q & A

BY RODERICK WOODCOCK

Sync or swim

Q We have used a Fisher FVH-730 VHS VCR for five years to build a tape collection. Now we're ready to replace it, but have noticed that many tapes made with it won't sync on friends' VCRs. How can we assure ourselves that a new machine we buy will play our tapes properly? George M. Naimark Cedar Knolls, N.J.

A You don't indicate in your letter, but my guess is that many of your tapes were recorded at one of the slower speeds, LP or EP (a.k.a. SLP). While slow speeds let you put more programming onto a tape, the economy speeds are notorious for poor tracking when played on other VCRs. The problem is compounded by such other factors as tape shrinkage and stretching (due to environmental conditions during storage), wear and tear on the VCR's tape transport and video heads, and the actual width of the heads.

Full tape interchange (the term for how well a tape made on one VCR plays on another) is not guaranteed for either of the slow VHS speeds, so it may be wise to take one or two sample cassettes along when you shop for your new deck. Try them on different machines until you find one that works well. This should help, but it won't guarantee total compatibility since even different units of the same model can display different characteristics.

Pixel on the fritz

Q I received a Sony GV-8 Video Walkman for Christmas. I like it a lot, but one of the pixels on the screen seems to have burned out, and the hole in the display is annoying. Can this be repaired? J. Harmon Chicago, Ill.

A Sorry, but all LCD screens are manufactured as a single unit, and each pixel is wedged to the rest of the matrix—over 92,000 pixels in the case of

your GV-8. Quality control at the factory usually weeds out bad displays, but sometimes a pixel fails later on. The only repair is to replace the entire screen, an expensive option I don't recommend. If the warranty is still in effect, check with the dealer to see if the unit can be replaced.

8mm's flying squad

Q I understand that all 8mm camcorders and VCRs use only flying erase heads and not full erase heads as are found in VHS machines. Is there some technical obstacle that prevents VHS from using this type of head? If not, why doesn't the VHS format adopt it? David Baron Los Angeles, Calif.

A While current 8mm camcorders and VCRs use flying erase heads, the first 8mm decks used full erase heads (an electromagnet mounted in a fixed position along the tape path). But flying erase heads offer two advantages: seamless edits between scenes and the space saved by removing the larger full erase heads. However, these heads are usually used in conjunction with a full erase head, especially in table model decks, where space is less of an issue.

There's no technical reason why VHS could not use only a flying erase head; in fact, the JVC GR-S707 camcorder does so. This deluxe Super VHS Compact camcorder uses a standard diameter 62mm video drum fitted with four double azimuth record heads, two hi-fi audio heads and one flying erase head. By eliminating the full erase head, the size of the tape transport has been kept to a minimum. Expect other manufacturers to adopt similar designs in future VHS and VHS-C camcorders, and perhaps in some VCRs and personal video products as well.

Video Magazine welcomes your questions. Please include a phone number, but not a return envelope as the volume of mail does not permit replies. All letters may be edited for clarity and space. Address queries to Q & A, Video Magazine, 460 West 34 Street, New York, NY 10001.

EDITED BY BRIAN CLARK

NEW PRODUCTS



Two record modes highlight Casio TVCR

Casio's active matrix technology improves picture quality on its newest portable TVCR, the VF-7000. Its four-inch color LCD screen includes controls for color, tint, brightness, channel scanning and VHF/UHF viewing selection for channels 2 to 13 and 14 to 69.

The VHS VCR records in both SP and EP speeds. A sleep-timer permits two hours of unattended recording. Still frame, visual search and counter display round out the VCR features. A slide-in battery pack has jacks for video in/out, audio in/out, external power and antenna. The unit can also be powered by household current or a car battery. The tilting screen gives viewers a choice of angles.

Price: \$1,290.

For additional information, circle No. 152 on Reader Service Card.



Fisher VCR boasts easy-access jacks

Fisher's new FVH-7400 VHS VCR features input and output jacks on the front panel, making it easy to connect a camcorder to the VCR. Once the connection is made, a flying erase head smooths scene transitions during home edit sessions. A character generator and audio dubbing add further flexibility. The VCR's 181-channel cable-compatible tuner can be controlled manually or by a 43-function wireless remote control. Tape indexing denotes specific segments, and a go-to function skips to those segments. Additional features include a real-time tape counter, a 365-day/6-event timer and onscreen programming. The FVH-7400 employs four double azimuth heads.

Price: \$429.95.

For additional information, circle No. 153 on Reader Service Card.

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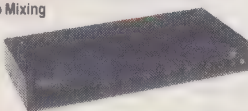
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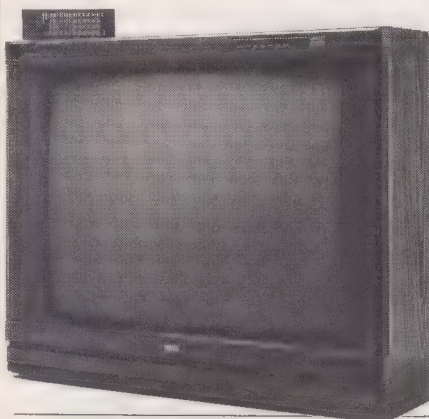
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NEW PRODUCTS



New screen is Yamaha's largest

Yamaha's YM-320S monitor/receiver features a 32-inch screen. Front panel S-video and audio/video inputs, along with three direct A/V inputs and two A/V outputs, make the 320S suitable for use in large, integrated A/V systems.

The rear panel includes an S-video input, a monitor output, fixed and variable audio outputs, separate speaker terminal outputs and a dual antenna.

Price: \$1,999.

For additional information,
circle No. 156 on Reader Service Card.

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VIDEO YEARBOOKS

RCA offers two full-size camcorders

Color enhancement lights are the unusual assets of two new VHS camcorders, the CC311 and the 286, from RCA. A ten-watt light attaches to each camcorder without the need for extra cords or batteries, and illuminates an area up to ten feet in front of the camcorder.

The CC311 has such RCA ProEdit features as a flying erase head, audio and video dubbing, microphone mixing, edit search and synchro edit. A full-size headwheel and 8x power zoom further enhance the CC311. The 286 has a 6x power zoom. Both also offer animation capability, macro focus, automatic focus, 3-lux light sensitivity and 1/1000 of a second shutters.

Price: CC311, \$1,299; CC286, \$1,099.



RCA CC311

For additional information,
circle no. 154 on Reader Service Card.

Tokina introduces ultra-small lenses

Tokina's VC-6515-S accessory lens kit is designed to complement the lightweight video technology employed in Sony's miniature TR5 camcorder and in similar models by other brands. The kit includes two lenses, a 0.65x wide-angle lens and a 1.5x telephoto lens. The lenses weigh just 2.1 and 2.5 ounces, respectively, sparing the camera body the strain of extra weight.

Price: \$109.95.



For additional information,
circle no. 155 on Reader Service Card.



BRING SUMMER HOME LIVE

Superlative gear
to capture summer's
sights and sounds.





SHARP CAPTURES SUMMER FUN

"...EXQUISITE VIDEO DETAIL..."

Video gear for preserving summer memories has to be more than just high tech. It has to be ready to travel.

Sharp combines both in an extremely advanced camcorder package that's as light, portable and stylish as it is loaded with high-end features.

The VL-L280U arms you with creative possibilities and comes with a 12X power zoom lens — twice as powerful as most of its counterparts. This quick, autofocus zoom lets you capture a closeup of that game-winning volleyball spike from yards away in the dunes, giving your videos exquisite detail you'll appreciate for seasons to come. For the final touch of clarity on those action shots, a switchable high-speed electronic shutter lets you choose between 1/2000, 1/1000 and 1/500-second speeds to capture every nuance of motion and drama for home playback.

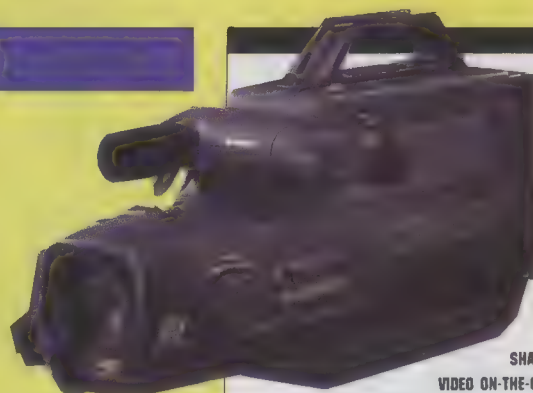
When dusk comes and you light the evening bonfires, this is one camcorder that can keep on going. Its unique Cat's Eye system lets it keep taping even in the murk of only 2 lux illumination. The mix of its zoom and low-light capabilities make the VL-L280U the perfect camcorder choice for summer activities from camping to beach parties to family excursions.

With this camcorder, your videos will come out right. The Sharp combines automatic focus and white balance with auto iris to ensure perfect picture parameters. Of course, manual focus is always an option for purists. Macro adds the final touch, allowing ultra-close shots that capture stunning detail and texture.

For portable playback, there's no better choice than Sharp's new combination TV/VCR, the VC-V540U. It sports a four-inch color monitor for exceptional color and image quality. A full-size VHS VCR and three power source choices, AC, DC or car battery make this the perfect travelling companion.

When you get home and want to add the professional touches to your tapes before adding them to the summer archives, camcorder features like digital superimpose are perfect. The VL-L280U gives your videos that professionally-edited look with titles or graphic designs in eight rich colors, regular or reversed.

Advanced editing features include a flying erase head for smooth scene transitions, fade in/fade out, and audio dubbing for custom soundtracks. You can even create time lapse effects thanks to interval recording — so you can keep forever the setting of the August moon.

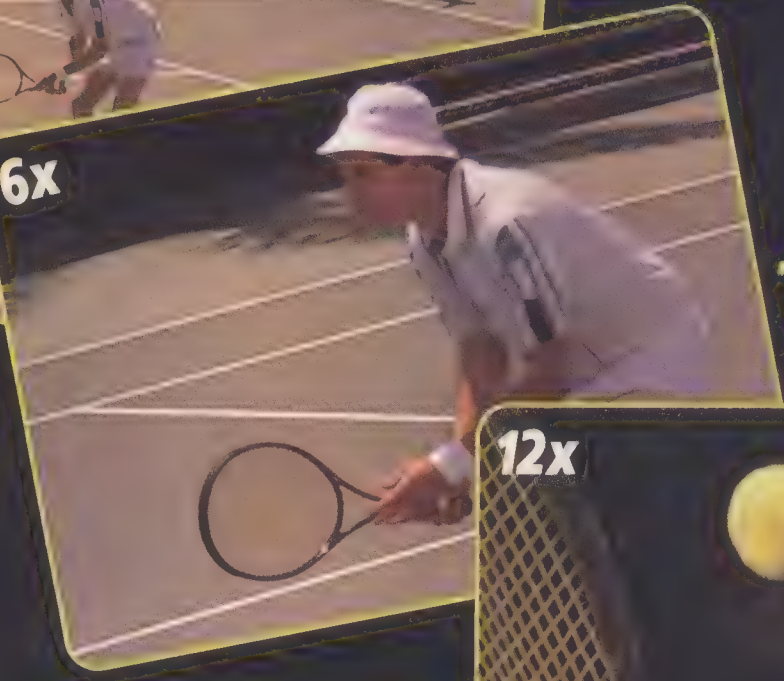


SHARP
VIDEO ON-THE-GO.

Sharp continues to win innovation laurels. Their high end camcorders combine form with high-end function. And they've broken ground with industry firsts like the Voice Coach Remote and their all-new LCD projection television. An established leader in LCD products, Sharp has also introduced a three-inch LCD color TV that's perfect at the beach or in the woods. Unlike many other small screen TVs, the 3ML100 incorporates a unique backlighting system that simulates natural sunlight and boosts picture clarity. A white LCD panel and a black matrix system preserve picture quality and provide a superior contrast ratio of 1:60 for clear images regardless of any lighting situation. Weighing less than 11 ounces, this unit is perfect for vacation video.

1x

**Any camcorder
can get you from
here...**

6x

...to here.

12x

Sharp has the first

12x1

ZOOM LENS to get you this close.

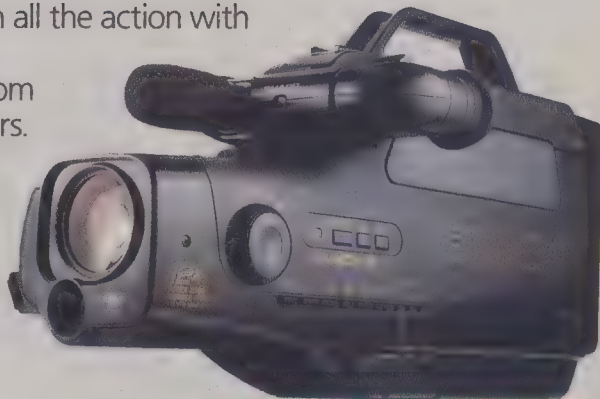
Who's Zoomin' Who?

Sharp's 12 x 1 Zoom Camcorder. That's who. You'll catch all the action with Sharp's innovative 12 x 1 variable speed power zoom lens.

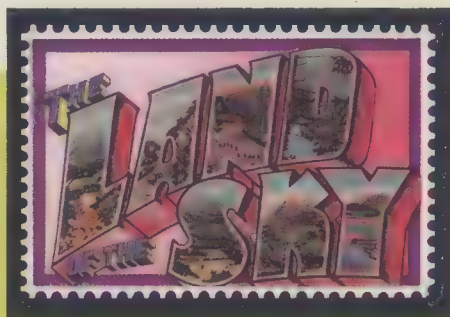
It's the first camcorder that delivers full 12 x 1 super-zoom power, to get you twice as close as most other camcorders.

Sharp's 12 x 1 Zoom Camcorder has all the automatic features you want most. Plus, it's so lightweight and easy to use, all you have to do is turn it on and shoot.

Catch all the action and all the fun—with the first zoom that's 12 x 1!



SHARP®
FROM SHARP MINDS
COME SHARP PRODUCTS™



TAMRON BRIDGES PHOTO AND VIDEO

"...PUTS PHOTOS ON VIDEO..."

Summer scrapbooks come in two distinct types — photographic and video — that until now have been virtually incompatible. Tamron's FOTOVIX line bridges the gap. FOTOVIX lets you mix and match memories from your video collection and your photo album to create home productions unlike anything you've ever experienced.

With the Tamron FOTOVIX III, you can watch all your photographs on your home television — using either slides or negatives. This small, advanced unit can not only replace a slide projector, but thanks to its one-touch, 3X zoom lens, it offers dynamic cropping and magnification of any part of the picture you like.

Once your FOTOVIX has gotten the perfect picture on screen, you can easily record it to videotape or to a floppy-disc recorder. The FOTOVIX III even lets you adjust brightness and color balance via a convenient joy-stick control to tailor exactly the look you want. Your summer photo collection has never been so advanced.

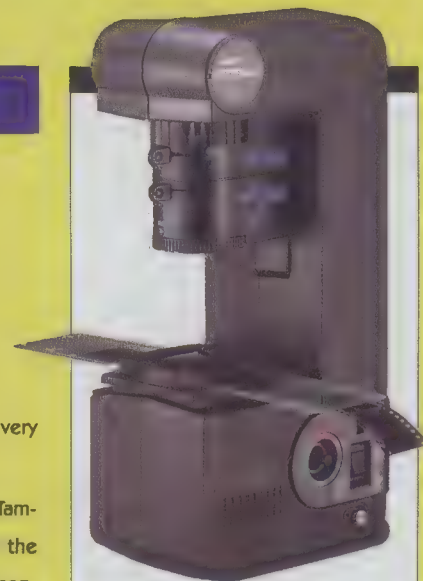
The unit's film carrier guide rotates for either horizontal or vertical picture viewing. A little imagination can show you how you can combine stills from a FOTOVIX with live action from your on-location camcorder shoots, add a little editing and titling and come out with a compendium of summer

memories you'll want to dupe and send to every relative in the family.

For an even bigger menu of features, try the Tamron FOTOVIX II-X film video processor. Like the FOTOVIX III, it comes with a negative-positive converter, but it also packs a 6X zoom lens as a bonus. It can handle large format films as well as 35mm, making it as good a choice for professionals as consumers. The FOTOVIX II-X can also project printed material like books and documents or — if you aim it at the action — it will reproduce live scenes.

Tamron supplies several accessories to the FOTOVIX system that also have application in the home or in the workplace. The FOTOVIX Stack-Load Slide Feeder features automatic slide-feed for video transfer, film search or organization. Their FOTOVIX Editor is a flexible, easy-to-use system that frames shots, masks portions of pictures to highlight a particular subject, or adds pointer cues to indicate a spot of special interest.

If you're really serious about keeping all your summer memories you will want to look at time and again, get a FOTOVIX and keep them all on video. It opens the whole world of tape up to the world of film. It makes your photo album video-ready for the very first time.



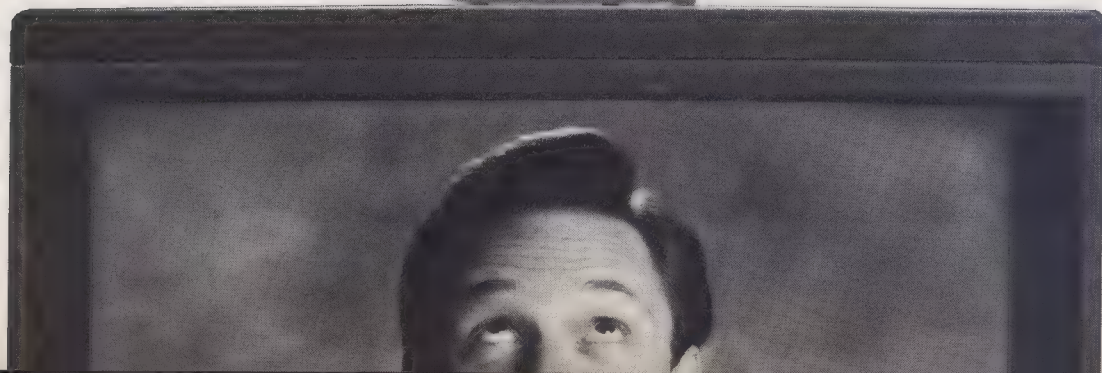
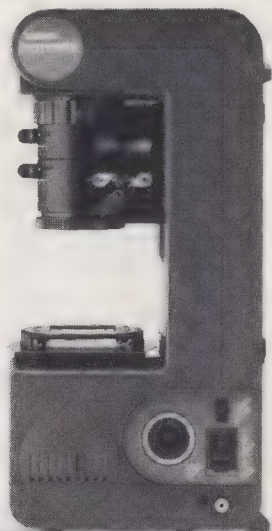
TAMRON FOTOVIX

Tamron has had many years' worth of experience in high-end optics. Their new video conversion lens kit for compact 8mm camcorders expands a camcorder's focal length range for telephoto and wide-angle action. The kit consists of 1.5x tele and .75x wide converters that expand the effective focal length range of a camcorder from 8mm to 99mm, providing a powerful telephoto effect as well as sufficient wide-angle coverage. This lens kit is compatible with models from Sony, Ricoh, Nikon and Kyocera. It's just another example of how Tamron opens up your home video horizons.

Start developing negative habits.

Start using Fotovix, and display your negatives as positives on TV. Fotovix brings photography and video together, letting you preview every shot before you print it. Use a VCR to create a video library. Fotovix will also display slides, and it crops, enlarges and color-balances with push-button simplicity. See your Tamron dealer for a demonstration or write: Tamron Industries, Inc., Box 388, Port Washington, NY 11050. In Canada: Amplis Photo, 22 Telson Rd., Markham, Ont. L3R1E5. Once you try it, we think you'll be hooked.

TAMRON
FOTOVIX



"...THE FORMAT
OF CHOICE..."



CANON HI-8 CAPTURES SUMMER

If preserving summer's best moments in ultra-high quality video is your first priority, you can't beat Canon's Hi-Band 8mm video camcorders for doing the job with style.

Hi-Band 8mm, or Hi-8, is probably the best and brightest of the extended resolution formats available to consumers today. For those who care about vibrancy and color, clarity and crispness, this is the format of choice.

The new Canon A1 Mark II camcorder features a 410,000-pixel CCD image sensor and a new auto-focusing system that maintains perfect focus on

the subject as it moves within the viewfinder. So whether you're taping a soccer game or a sailboat race, you can rest assured that the visions will be right.

And what visions...With a 10X zoom lens and macro mode, you can shoot from wide-angle to close-up with equal ease. 400 line resolution combined with natural (and automatic) color balance and low-light capability of 4 lux ensure perfection every time. A sophisticated two-field metering system takes separate readings of the entire image and the central zone, making sure every exposure is right.



*The new
Canon E51
is quite
electrifying.*

To further tailor your shoots, you can choose from one of seven high-speed shutter modes, or add title and date — or fade in or out, should you ever wish. A flying erase head makes for flawless scene transitions, and its AFM Hi-Fi stereo sets up a superior soundtrack.

The whole package is tied together by a convenient wireless remote. For ultimate ease of use, dual action grips and a rotating viewfinder facilitate difficult shots like low-angles. The A1 Mark II can even be held like a still-picture camera.

Another new Canon Hi-Band 8mm camcorder, the H680, touts a combination character generator and digital superimposer for creative titling and special effects. Canon's exclusive 180-degree FlexiGrip (TM) is a grip-viewfinder combo that rotates to make low- and high-angle shooting easy and comfortable.

Weighing in at just over 3 lbs., this unit is a

miniature powerhouse. Its lens with 8x zoom provides wide and tele-macro capability with improved edge sharpness.

The H680 also features a four-position high-speed shutter, an interval timer for time-lapse recording, and Canon's unique center-weighted average exposure system. Like the A1 Mark II, the H680 features a wireless remote control and Hi-Fi Stereo audio.

When you look at your screen and see the 400 line resolution, though, you won't be thinking about this camcorder's technology. You'll be too caught up in the crystal-clear memories of summer.



CANON'S A1 MARK II

Canon makes sure your Hi-Band 8mm camcorder comes with everything you need to shoot the same day. Battery packs, compact power adapters, wireless remote, metal cassette, cables are all standard.

In fact, the E51 is so full of features yet so fully automatic, it can turn any moment into electrifying video.

Its 8x power zoom gets you in close when you're far away. Its 180° FlexiGrip™ lets you catch the action from hard-to-reach angles. And Canon's expert lens crafting means sharp, brilliant color images every time.

It even has a wireless remote to make recording and playback more convenient.

Make your video moments more electrifying. Visit your Canon dealer and check out the new

Canon
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Canon E51
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We know what it takes to make great video.



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VIDEONICS: THE EDITOR'S ADVANTAGE

"...IT DOES THE EDITING FOR ME."

Having just received a camcorder for my birthday, a day-long cruise with the kids was a perfect opportunity to try it out. I got everything on tape: Tommy reeling in his first fish, Betsy watching the waves, the helpful crew laughing with their captain, and even the beautiful sunset. I was thrilled with my new toy.

The next weekend I set up my camcorder and showed the excursion to friends and family. I was happy with some of it, but much of the footage featured the deck of the boat. Everyone had a good laugh, but a friend suggested that I hook up my camcorder to my VCR and omit the deck footage.

I heeded the friendly advice and began production the next day. It took me four hours just to note the beginnings and endings of all the scenes and I hadn't even begun manually editing the video. After an entire day of working on this mammoth project, I realized that almost all of the scenes were missing the first few seconds and that there was snow at every cut.

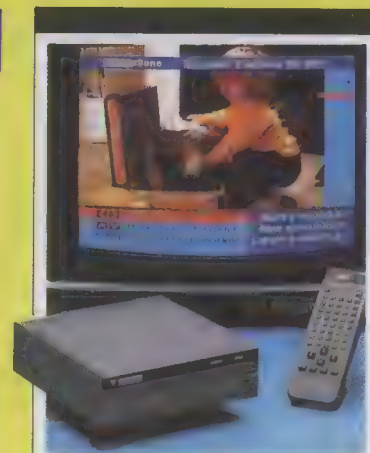
For Father's Day I received the Videonics DirectED Plus video editor, and now I can have some fun while it does all the editing for me. It lets me be in control of my original video by remembering the location, beginning, ending, and order of as many

as 1000 scenes. It does all this by simulating the infra-red code of my main VCR's remote control. Once the scenes are established, all I have to do is insert the requested tape, press rewind, and then play on my play-only deck. If sometime in the future I want to make another copy of that same final production, all I have to do is choose it from a list of movie scripts.

I also wanted to use the kids' smiling faces for the beginning and ending of the production. The DirectED Plus let me do this by duplicating the same scene for a great opening and closing. After I had finished the production I realized that I didn't want to embarrass Betsy by including the scene where she was afraid to touch the fish she had caught, so I just edited it out and rearranged all the scenes.

I even added subtitles, graphics, and effects to the video thanks to the system's 20 graphics, 12 title style, 17 special effects, and an amazing 64 available colors.

Best of all, the DirectED Plus will never be obsolete because it can always be upgraded with new hardware and software. With this video editor from Videonics, I was able to enjoy the video of my summer trip without having to work hard on putting together the vacation footage all by myself.

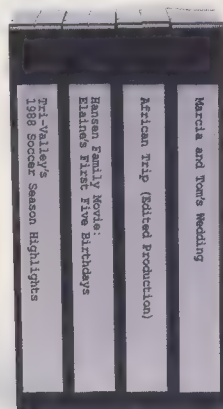


VIDEONICS DIRECTED PLUS

Learning to use the DirectED Plus editor is easy if you read through the manual and follow the on-screen instructions. But if you still need help just call the Videonics HelpLine (408) 866-8300 weekdays from 8-12 in the morning and 1-5 in the afternoon for free professional assistance. Keep in mind that once you've purchased a DirectED Plus your editing capabilities are virtually infinite, thanks to numerous possible software and hardware additions and emerging new software designed for use with this system. The key word is "system" since the DirectED Plus is a product that will continue to evolve as a result of research and development by its manufacturer.



Your memories are worth keeping.



Make them worth watching with DirectED PLUS.™

Your home videos contain some great moments. And some not-so-great moments. Now you can make your home videos something you'll be proud to show with DirectED PLUS, the personal movie maker from Videonics.™

DirectED PLUS is a complete video editor! Now you can edit unwanted footage from your home videos, just like professionals do! Mark hundreds of scenes, on any tape, or tapes, in your home video library. DirectED PLUS will automatically assemble them into a finished production, complete with titles, graphics, and special effects, at the touch of a button!

DirectED PLUS is a title generator! Add brilliant titles in 12 different styles to your videos.

Choose from 64 colors. Superimpose titles over your video scenes or over color backgrounds.



Add titles in 12 styles and 64 colors.

DirectED PLUS is a graphics generator! Add your choice of 20 colorful, digital graphics, such as a birthday cake or wedding rings. Combine graphics and titles with any of 17 unique special effects to make your video scenes more personalized and exciting!



Combine titles with your choice of 20 colorful, digital graphics.

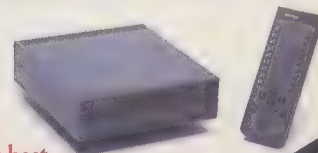


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Edit your best with DirectED PLUS



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SIMA: ACCESSORIES OF SUMMER

"...AN ACCESSORY FOR EVERY APPLICATION."

Nothing's more disappointing than coming home from summer vacation to discover that the videos you had so much fun shooting didn't come out right. Sima "video necessities" — a large line of accessory essentials — can help prevent such a catastrophe from ever happening in the first place.

Camera stability, proper lighting, sound quality and editing original video are all important parts of bringing the summer home on tape. Improving a video is as easy as simply integrating some additions into your videomaking.

A common problem when shooting action shots is "camera quake" — caused by having to pan too fast with no support or by simple exhaustion when that three pound camcorder starts to feel like three hundred pounds. Sima's VideoProp eliminates the jitters. A kind of walking tripod, the VideoProp is a telescoping pod that rests on your chest and is stabilized by a strap worn around your neck.

The ProLine of video tripods have been designed with the avid videomaker in mind and will help you achieve rock-steady shooting. Equipped with two-way fluid panheads, these durable tripods also feature heavy-duty closed channel legs and

an all metal, gear-controlled elevator. The model ST-26 ProLine tripod is for use with compact camcorders while the larger ST-30 is designed for full-size models.

Once you've taken out the shake, turn on the light. Sima's SensorLight is a computer-controlled cordless video light that features a built-in computerized sensor that automatically adjusts brightness for sparkling, true color videos. Best of all, this 20 watt quartz halogen light provides up to 40 minutes of illumination — twice that of similar models.

Capturing summer's soundtrack is as important as preserving its visions. Sima's MixerMike, a unique device that incorporates a hi-fidelity microphone with an audio mixer, plugs into any personal cassette player, allowing you to add background music while shooting the video. Wireless microphones can be mixed, narration can be added, and voice-overs can be inserted from handheld microphones all with this unit. All these capabilities will allow you to easily balance and monitor microphone and music volumes making your videos sound as great as they look.

For shooting footage in the field, try the Sima Super SoundCatcher, a high-frequency wireless re-



SIMA VIDEO LIGHT.

To keep your videos looking great, Sima offers a LensCare Kit that includes everything you need to keep your video lens in top shape for sharp, clear images every time. The kit includes a specially-formulated lens cleaner, a rubber bulb blower brush, a lens cleaning solution, lens tissue, and a protective skylight filter with adapter rings. If you would like to find out about more Sima accessories or if you ever have a need for a particular accessory and would like to make a suggestion, call toll free: 800-345-7462.

mote microphone that comes complete with an earphone monitor and a storage case. An operating range of up to 400 feet and LED indicators will assure you of foolproof operation no matter where you are. This system also comes with a convenient shoe mount attachment and an omnidirectional lavalier clip-on microphone.

For superb sonic touches, try Sima's Video SoundMixer. Add narration, background music, sound effects or even create a completely new soundtrack for your video with this unit which comes in both mono and stereo.

To tote your camcorder, Sima introduces the Cam-Pocket, a lightweight carrying holster constructed with tough padded nylon. This convenient cam-

corder carrying accessory is available in two styles for both VHS-C and 8mm format models and includes compartments for spare batteries and tapes. It also features a water-resistant inner drawstring rainslicker to protect your video investment even in the worst summertime squall.

Sima seems to have an accessory for every application. Their CopyKit lets you transfer old home movies and slides to videotape. All you have to do is videotape the image from a rear projection screen that reflects the projected slides or movies from a mirror.

If your home videos haven't been quite what you wanted, this summer try Sima video accessories. You'll appreciate the way they enhance your home video...for many years to come.

If you prefer to add sonic touches to your video after you've recorded it, then you will want to try Sima's video SoundMixer. This handy videotape audio mixer is connected to your camcorder and your VCR when your transferring the video, and lets you adjust the sound of the original audio track to suit your taste. This system has both stereo and mono capabilities and comes complete with two microphones.

GREAT SOUND FROM GREAT DISTANCES!

super SoundCatcher®...

Professional quality wireless microphone system

Clean, crisp sound can make the difference between ordinary and extraordinary video productions. That's why our new ProLine™ Series super SoundCatcher is the choice of demanding amateurs who want professional audio results. Its state-of-the-art technology and the utilization of two high-transmission frequencies provide noise-free high fidelity sound from distances of 400 feet and beyond. The high powered pocket-size transmitter comes with both hand-held and clip-on microphones that capture voice and all other sounds at their source with the utmost precision.

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VIDEO NECESSITIES



Sima Products Corp.,

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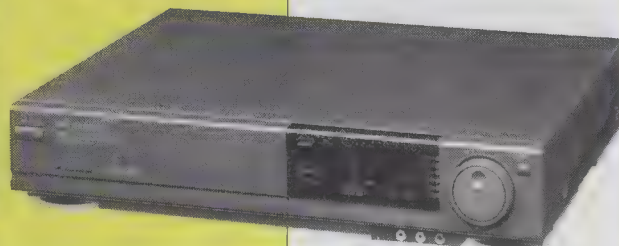
EDITING PERFECTION FROM PANASONIC PRO

"...ASSURES PERFECT PICTURE QUALITY."

Looking for that extra edge of professional quality in your summer videomaking? Panasonic Professional video equipment incorporates advanced S-VHS technologies to produce elite gear for serious home users and pros alike.

With this in mind, Panasonic has recently introduced the AG-1960 Editing Video Cassette Recorder, an S-VHS deck with Hi-Fi stereo recording that achieves more than 400 lines of horizontal resolution and provides a slew of advanced editing features. Its Super-4-Head Video System utilizes high-output heads that take full advantage of S-VHS picture quality during record and playback. If using standard VHS is more convenient, this unit allows both playback and recording on standard VHS tapes.

Aside from superior resolution, this professional deck features a high-speed tape transport and a high-response mechanism. Its dual-loading system combines conventional full-loading and half-loading systems to cut fast forward and rewind times to almost half the normal length of time. This mechanism also helps increase high-speed search in all three playback modes.



For increased editing capabilities, the AG-1960 adds jog and shuttle controls which advance or reverse the tape one frame with every 40-degree rotation. The jog dial will also allow for quick, smooth response from still-playback to high-speed search.

If you care so much about production quality, you'll certainly want to avoid image jitters. Several mechanisms, including a twin-projection cylinder, a large-diameter impedance roller, and a 10-bit digital servo, restrict image jitter for perfect image stability at all times. In addition, an advanced Digital Tracking Adjustment System automatically minimizes video distortion and assures picture perfection at all times.

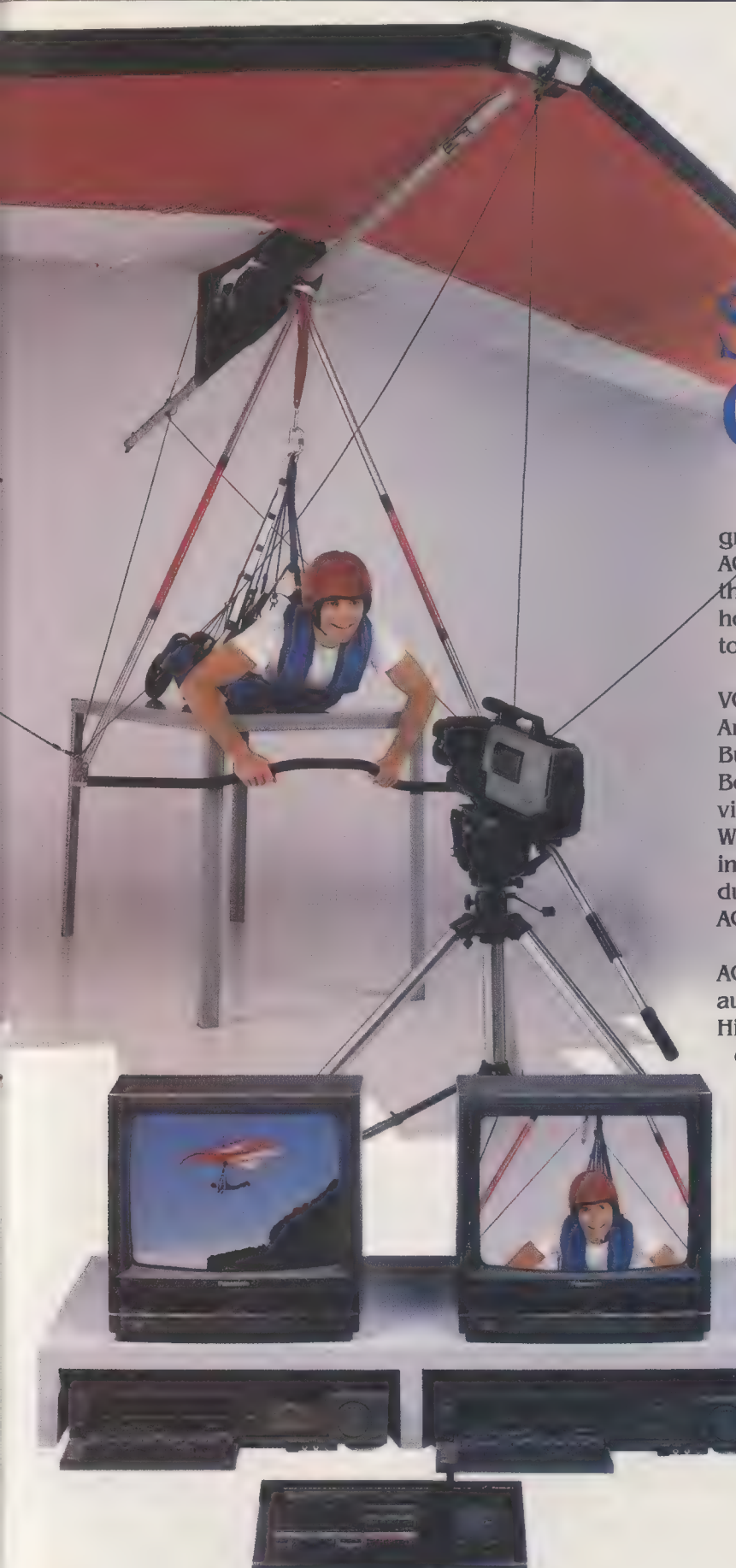
Sonic clarity is also high on this deck's priority list.

The exceptional Hi-Fi stereo sound boasts a dynamic range of more than 90dB. And vibration and resonance from the unit itself are eliminated to deliver superb, noise-free sound from your home videos.

The AG-1960 from Panasonic Audio Video Systems Group is the video cassette recorder that can turn an average video session into a summer shoot worth saving.

PANASONIC AG-1960

The AG-1960's superior resolution results from an enhanced signal-to-noise ratio and an increase in the FM luminance signal frequency and bandwidth. Resolution is further enhanced by processing the luminance and chrominance video signals separately through S-Video In/Out connectors. The unit also features a Synchro Edit Connector that facilitates connections with selected Panasonic camera/recorders for accurately-synchronized assemble edits. Front panel A/V input terminals and a convenient edit switch are also provided. The Panasonic Audio Video Systems Group is a division of the Panasonic Communications and Systems Company.



Panasonic Puts SVHS Editing On The Table.

Make your next video soar to even greater heights. With the Panasonic® AG-1960 SVHS Editing VCR. By bringing the exceptional resolution of SVHS and a host of professional editing capabilities to your table.

For starters, the AG-1960 SVHS Editing VCR delivers over 400 lines of resolution. And it's upwardly compatible with VHS. But that's not all that makes it so special. Because the AG-1960 lets you arrange videos into any sequence you desire. With professional editing capabilities like insert and assembly editing, and audio dubbing when coupled with a Panasonic AG-A95 Editing Controller.

To speed up the editing process, the AG-1960 incorporates a jog/shuttle dial, auto digital tracking and an innovative High Response Mechanism. Which dramatically reduces its fast forward and rewind times. And brings up images from "stop" in less than three seconds.

So if you're ready to do more than just play and record, put a Panasonic AG-1960 SVHS Editing VCR on your table.

For more information, see your Panasonic Professional/Industrial Video Dealer, or call:

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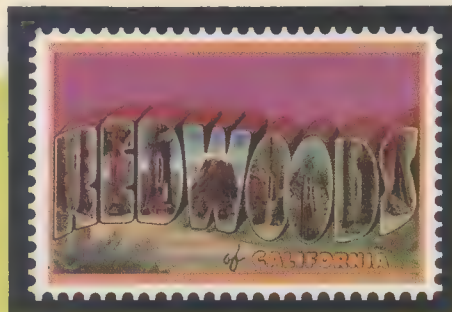
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Seattle Region: (206) 285-8883

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Panasonic
Professional/Industrial Video



VIDICRAFT DELIVERS THE FINAL FINISH

"...WITNESS THE DIFFERENCE IN VIDEO QUALITY..."

Adding the finishing touches to your vacation video is the key to keeping the memories as wonderful as the experience. Remixing the audio track that features unwanted wind noise and enhancing the color of the clear blue sea will make your trip as vivid on video as it rests in your mind.

To help you create timeless videos, Vidicraft has introduced an upgraded version of its popular VDM 200 video processor, the Vidimate 300S, a unit that features stereo audio mixing and SVHS-compatible video processing in a single accessory.

This latest model also features composite video processing and enhancement, with redesigned outline, detail, brightness, and sharpness controls for more effective images. The advanced detail circuits provide a broader range of video noise reduction while increasing the full range of enhancements to accommodate SVHS.

Capable of operating six VCRs simultaneously (two SVHS and four VHS), this unit is also compatible with VHS-C, Beta and 8mm VCRs. For fine tuning the video, you need to be able to compare a duplicate copy to an original. The Vidimate provides a split screen function that lets you witness the difference in video quality for the type of side-by-

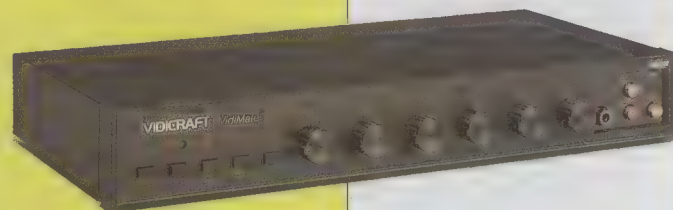
side comparisons that professional videographers use.

Along with upgraded video processing features, this unit also boasts improved audio mixing capabilities. The Vidimate 300S is specifically designed so that both sources are mixed at full level at the center audio position. As you mix from source to source, the first remains at full level until the control passes the center position, making for seamless edits.

Audio mixing can be manually controlled from either stereo or mono sources. An auto fade feature lets you automatically fade both the audio and video from two selectable inputs for ultimate flexibility. You can even switch both sources during play or record.

In addition to its audio/video outputs, the Vidimate 300S also provides inputs for two video sources, one SVHS source, two stereo audio sources, and one microphone.

The Vidimate 300S's enhanced features and circuitry will make sure that your midsummer night's dream will remain a priceless winter reality.



VIDICRAFT'S VIDIMATE 300S

Vidicraft Incorporated is a technology leader that has historically focussed its product line on video accessories for camcorder users and home video enthusiasts alike. And the company has announced that it will continue to broaden its product line in the years ahead. Several innovations to come include a range of wireless audio/video products and audio-related products that will build upon the innovation of its recently-debuted Vidimate 300S. In keeping with this commitment to accessory leadership, the company has unveiled the new "Vidi-View" a wireless audio/video transmission device for the home and office video user.

The Vidi-View

by Vidicraft

Audio/Video Wireless Transmitter

Vidicraft's new and innovative Vidi-View allows home or office audio/video signals to be transmitted within a range of 200 feet without the need of cables and wires. Now you can view your home and commercial videos throughout your home and office without the purchase of additional VCR equipment. View cable signals at one location and send your video to another.

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VIDICRAFT®
A Video Technology Company





HITACHI VIDEO HI-FIDELITY

"...ENHANCED VIDEO FIDELITY..."

Hitachi camcorders deliver hi-fidelity for your eyes. This leading innovator of high quality video technology has introduced two advanced camcorders with eye-opening video features such as a 10-watt movie light and a unique Accu-Shot AX function which automatically adjusts both the shutter speed and the iris to reach an optimum lens combination for any shooting situation. Thus, it's perfect for those ultra-bright beach scenes and that moonlight cruise as well.

Clearly a leader in the new "higher-definition" Super VHS technology, Hitachi's VM-S7200A camcorder provides more than 400 lines of horizontal resolution to achieve and preserve clear, crisp images that far exceed that of conventional VHS. In addition to the Accu-Shot AX function, the model boasts enhanced video fidelity brought on by a shock-absorbing cylinder head stabilizer and a tape tracker that suppresses vertical line distortion and mechanical noise. A 2/3-inch MOS image sensor also helps to keep your video images vivid in illumination as low as five lux.

Along with innovative technologies, the VM-S7200A also helps bring out the videographer in you. A flying erase head provides smooth scene transitions and gives your vacation vid-

eos a professionally-edited look. Subtitles can be added with its built-in character generator which uses an easy-to-use jog-type titler to generate up to ten pages of text in eight different colors.

If you're satisfied with what VHS has to offer, the VM-3270A is anything but a standard-grade machine. This model also includes a 10 watt movie light that will help you capture warmer, more natural colors, while it increases the camcorder's depth of field. This add-on is coupled with Hitachi's CCD II image sensor that provides accurately-exposed shots in light levels as low as three lux for foolproof home video recording — anywhere or anytime.

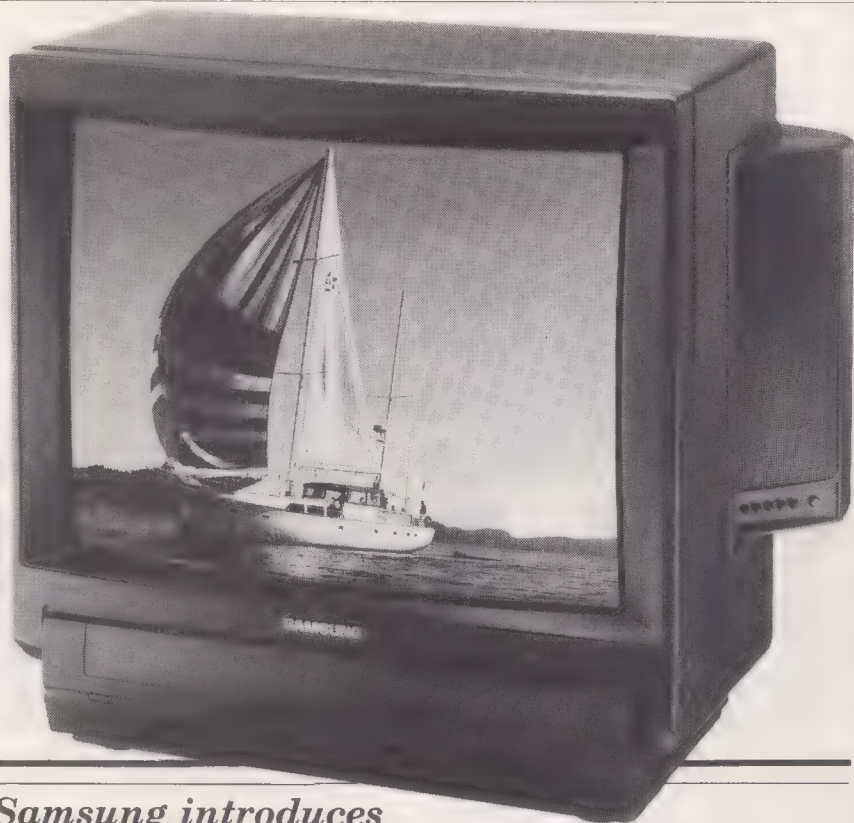
This unit, like the VM-S7200A, also features time-lapse or interval recording, auto focus, auto iris, auto white balance, mic mixing and an earphone speaker for audio monitoring and playback. Among its array of editing features, this model has a flying erase head, an edit search function, and synchro editing capabilities that allow you to control two video decks simultaneously.

Hitachi puts together user-friendly features with the best possible technology under the sun to help you bring home your vacation videos in the "highest of fi."



HITACHI'S VM-3270A

Easy operation of video equipment is key to capturing the best video fidelity. Hitachi's Accu-Shot AX and Auto Flickerless functions assure you great-looking videos without the hassles. The Accu-Shot AX feature automatically regulates lighting parameters by controlling both the camcorder's shutter speed and its iris. The Auto Flickerless function further alleviates video headaches. This feature is derived from a special circuit that prevents picture distortion sometimes caused by variations in electrical sources.



Samsung introduces combination monitor/VCR

The Samsung VM-7003 combines a 20-inch video monitor with a built-in VHS VCR. Features include a 140-channel cable-compatible tuner, onscreen programming, a four-event/one-year timer, picture search, audio/video input and output jacks and a 27-key infrared remote control.

Price: Between \$859 and \$899.

For additional information, circle No. 115 on Reader Service Card.



Accessory bag fits on tripod legs

Gitzo's triangular accessory bag, the F88, is 15 inches wide on each side and attaches to the three legs of any tripod with three straps. It folds up with the tripod, and holds filters, cassettes, batteries and other accessories during shooting. The bag is soft fabric.

Price: \$69.95.

For additional information, circle No. 116 on Reader Service Card.

Ambico introduces VHS rewinder

A drop-in, toaster-style rewinder from Ambico, the V-0756, rewinds a T-120 VHS cassette in approximately three minutes. When finished, the tape pops out. The compact device is barely larger than the tape itself.

Price: \$24.95.



For additional information, circle No. 117 on Reader Service Card.

GE headset narrates voiceovers

GE's narrator headset permits a user to record voiceover narration while taping or monitoring audio during a recording session. To record voiceover narration, just plug the headphone connector into a camcorder's headphone jack and the microphone into the camcorder's external mic jack. To monitor the audio, plug the headphone connector into the camcorder's headphone jack. The ICVH100 narrator headset can be used with all cameras and camcorders that have appropriate jacks.

Price: \$29.95.



For additional information, circle No. 118 on Reader Service Card.



VIDEO ADVENTURES SPECIAL

You can be the hero of your own adventure. The star of a saga you create. Indiana Jones disguised as a tourist. The leading man—or woman—of a two-week personal epic. You can start at home, journey to a faraway land and wrap it up with a happy ending. Your wife, husband, children and friends can be co-stars. Best of all, you can do it while taking a vacation. All you need is a camcorder, a destination and the urge to tell a story.

The destination is up to you, but we can equip you with important information about camcorders and the art of shooting on the go. And what better time than spring? This month's special section is devoted to the principle that any vacation worth taping is worth taping well.

Our contributing editors have assembled a quartet of articles to do the job. "Bring Back the Action" shows you how to think through a vacation video before the shooting starts, while "Sharp Shooters" guides you through today's maze of camcorders to the

latest models and the newest features.

For "Tips from Top Pros" Greg Solomon and Bob Barlow persuaded award-winning movie and TV photographers to share their shooting secrets (and discovered most shoot home videos of their own off the set). But technique isn't the whole story. "Don't Leave Home Without Them" goes over the accessories you'll absolutely, positively need on the road and a few you may just want to take along.

Camcorders have never been more portable or sophisticated. And vacations are the ideal time to practice the skills that make shooting fun. In return, camcorders give you the ability to bring home the one souvenir no money can buy, no guide can reveal: a tape that will keep your adventures fresh long after the sun-tans fade. Here's how to make the most of a camcorder vacation.



BRING BACK THE ACTION

How to shoot videos that capture your vacation's spirit with energy and style.

We all start out with ambitious plans to capture a trip's flavor on tape the first time a camcorder comes with us on a vacation. But in most cases, we only look at the tapes we return with once or twice—and not all 20 hours of them, just the good parts.

What's wrong? Usually, it's the disorganized quality of the tape: dark shots, shake shots, too many zooms, not enough close-ups, long unintentional stretches of sidewalk, muddled audio and so little continuity from one scene to another that two hours of video can feel longer than the two-week vacation it allegedly chronicles.

What we want to see is something similar to the programs we're accustomed to on television, if not as melodramatic: a video that tells a story, and tells it quickly. One of the great achievements of good storytelling, on film or in print, is the way it compresses time. Remember *Roots*, the epic of Alex Haley's search for his African ancestors? That story compressed 150 years with dozens of characters and places into 12 hours of film, including commercials. How do producers do it? The answer: They plan what they're going to do.



And so should you.

We're going to tell you how to think through even the simplest vacation so that the videotape you bring back will make those who weren't there wish they were, and those who were remember it longingly. You don't need a lot of exotic video equipment, although a few accessories always help (see "Don't Leave Home Without Them" elsewhere in this issue). But you do need a shooting plan, and you do need to follow it.

The first part of your plan is the most difficult. You should decide in advance how long your vacation video will run. For example, let's say each day of your trip leaves you—after deducting time spent sleeping, dressing, showering, dining and the like—with about 12 hours during which you'll want to use the camcorder. During that time you may read for an hour, hike for a couple of hours, swim for an hour or check out historic districts.

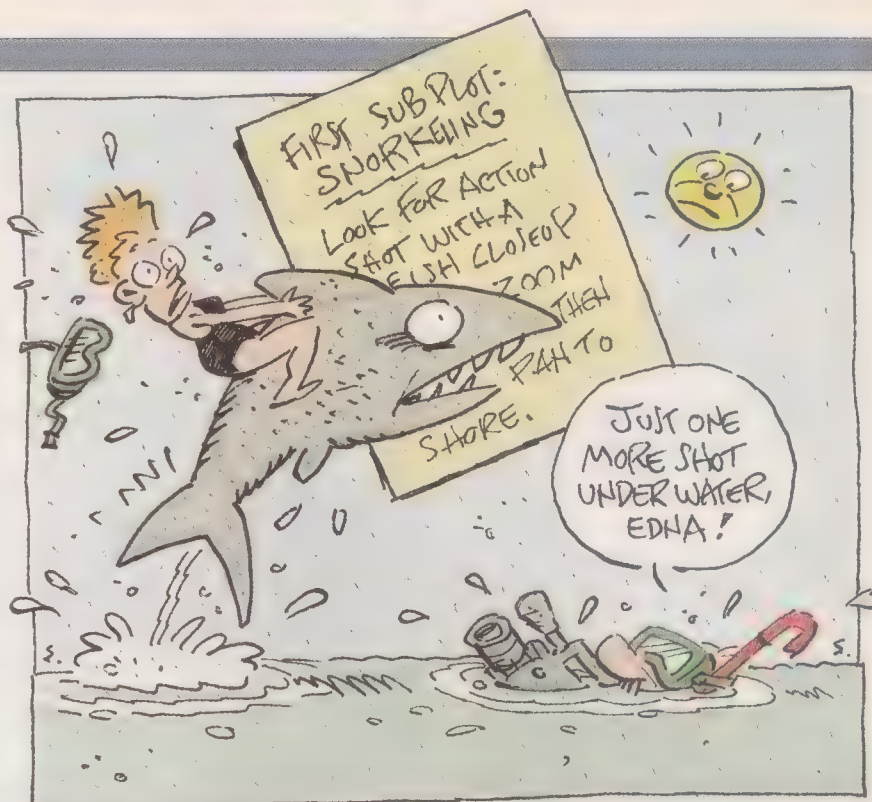
The point is to break down your vacation into its different activities and develop a feeling for how much of each activity you'll want to record. Obviously, you won't want an hour of someone reading, swimming, hiking or looking at buildings. But you will want a few moments of each (even reading) and that's what you should plan for.

Ask yourself how long the story of your vacation will take. This will help you determine how much or how little to shoot each day. As a guide, you should be able to capture each event in about three minutes of 30-second shots. That's six shots, give or take a couple. This kind of framework will keep your shooting concise and your footage moving along at a good clip.

If in the course of a few days, you go fishing, hiking, swimming and sightseeing, these four events should add up to at least 12 minutes of video. If you want to add a special lunch or dinner, add another three minutes; a cable car ride, three more minutes; and so on. But stay flexible. If you do the same thing several days in a row, don't feel you have to record more footage each day. Just watch for anything new. Sticking to this kind of discipline will also keep friends and family from feeling they're "on camera" all the time. Meanwhile, you're on your way toward compiling the two or three hours of video you want to return with.

THE PLOT THICKENS

You may not realize it, but by the time you start the trip, the rest of your shooting plan will have largely been completed: It's the itinerary for the vacation, a document you or a travel agent already worked out in detail. It tells you where you're going, how you're getting there, when you'll be there and how long you'll stay. It's also the outline for



your vacation video. Here's how it works, using a Caribbean cruise as an example. The itinerary for getting to the cruise and its first day might look like this:

12:15 p.m. Depart from Los Angeles airport.

9:17 p.m. Arrive in Miami.

10 p.m. Board ship, settle in, enjoy late buffet.

Midnight. Ship leaves Miami port.

6 to 9 a.m. Breakfast in the main dining room.

8 a.m. Ship docks in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

9 a.m. Tour departures begin with shopping expedition to San Juan's Old Town.

9:15 a.m. Group leaves to scuba dive among nearby wrecks.

9:20 a.m. Group leaves to snorkel in submarine gardens.

9:30 a.m. Group leaves to visit local historic monuments.

9:40 a.m. Party leaves for Luquillo Beach.

10 a.m. Onboard activities begin with first shuffleboard sessions.

10:15 a.m. Class in casino gambling.

10:30 a.m. Seminar in investment strategies on the sun deck.

Noon to 2 p.m. Lunch in the main dining room.

6 p.m. Ship leaves Puerto Rico for another port as first dinner sitting begins.

8 p.m. Late dinner sitting.

9:30 p.m. Movie screening.

9:45 p.m. Dancing instruction.

10 p.m. Floor show.

Using this or a similar itinerary, you can put together your own video outline, which will list events you want to shoot, day by day, and help you steer away from those that sound uninteresting.

The next step is to decide on the plot of your video. This is simply the main story you want to tell. The outline will help you focus on what's significant to you. The important thing is to decide on one plot for the video. Set up as many subplots as you like, but each should be less important than the plot. Their job is to support the main plot by adding color and diversity.

This is often simpler than it sounds. If you choose shopping as a main activity, then shopping becomes the plot and the places you see going to and from the stores and a few of the shipboard activities can be subplots. The entire cruise might be your plot, in which case you would want to cover a little bit of everything you do. If you're into scuba diving and snorkeling, this could be your plot, while the cruise, shopping, visiting local museums and just lying on the beach could be the subplots to support the story of your diving adventure.

ON THE BEACH

Let's say the beach itself is your plot, with snorkeling the subplot. At first glance, beaches and the people on them look pretty much the same, whether they're in California or the Caribbean. What will make your beach stand out is the perspective you bring to shooting it. Most beaches are unique in one way or

ACTION

another. Some stretch as far as you can see, some are secluded, some have hotels sprawling nearly to the water. Search out the qualities that give your beach its character — the setting, the size of the waves, the personalities of the beachgoers — then get the shots that convey them.

To get the particular look of a beach you'll almost always need a wide, establishing shot. It can be from the top of a hill or at water level. The point is to show the whole beach so that as you focus on the activities on the beach, your audience will have an image of that beach already in their minds.

Next, shoot whatever interests you on the beach in medium or tight close-ups. This could include swimming, volleyball games, a picnic, a conversation with a local or another tourist. Keep the shots short: 30 seconds each is about right. And don't repeat shots. One pan across a lunch buffet is enough. If you want to go back over the buffet for close-ups of individual dishes, keep these shots even shorter and locked off.

Try to shoot the video in the camera as if you will not have an opportunity to edit it. Your shooting will be tighter, more to the point and probably more interesting. If you do plan to edit the tapes later, you'll have a big head start since even a little planning will give you more coherent footage to work from.

Pay attention to what you're shooting and to what your next shot is likely to be. Make sure each shot fits well with the one before it. For example, it's okay to cut from one locked off shot to another, but it's not okay to cut from a moving shot to a still life. Each moving shot should have a beginning, a middle and an end. Whether you're panning, pushing, tilting or pulling the camcorder, start it from a still position, then move it, then stop. This locks off a shot from those immediately before and after it.

Getting back to the beach: The idea is to record the things that happen in an order that tells the story of the time you're there. If you use this technique on one beach at a time, you'll see how really different each beach looks when you get back home and screen the tape.

James Caruso and Mavis Arthur's most recent book is *A Beginner's Guide to Producing TV* (Prentice-Hall, 1990).



'Shoot the things that happen in an order that tells the story of the time you've spent.'

Now for the snorkeling subplot. You'll probably want to intersperse shots dealing with this among the beach shots because they go together so well. Keep in mind that you don't need an underwater housing to cope with snorkeling. For example, after you walk out of the water you can remove your mask and snorkel, look into the lens and describe what you saw underwater. Using the telephoto lens, you can shoot snorkelers from the shore or standing in waist-high water. You can shoot downward from a shallow boat if the water is clear. You can even shoot close-ups of postcards of underwater scenes to simulate what a snorkeler sees.

A second subplot could be another beach activity, like a volleyball game. But don't choose too many activities or try to shoot too many things at once. There'll be other days, at least at the start, and you don't want the camcorder to take the vacation over.

Don't neglect to capture the characteristic sounds of your trip. The ship's whistle, the music of steel bands on the beach, the sound of the surf and the bustle of a market will add immeasurably to your video's energy. If your camcorder allows it, you can even go back and overdub a sound to make a scene work better.

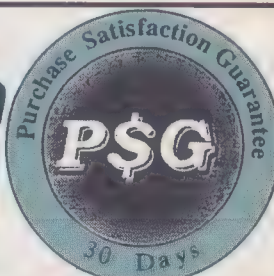
If you plan to edit the final footage, you can afford to spend less time planning and thinking about your shots. If you don't intend to edit, it's more important to mentally edit as you shoot. Think about how the shots go together and how much you're shooting. Always devote more time to the plot than the subplots. At the end, the footage for all the subplots should just about equal the footage shot for the main plot.

And the video your audiences expected merely to endure will make them wish, and feel, like they had just returned themselves.

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BY MURRAY SLOVICK



SHARP SHOOTERS

New features give vacation-bound camcorders an extra edge.

For 50 weeks a year life seems about as exciting as a 1040 form. Then the countdown you've run for months suddenly reaches zero and you're embarking on a video adventure. Maybe you'll be taping celebrities at the Cannes Film Festival or just practicing the fine art of backyard barbecue. Maybe you'll be perfecting a golf swing, visiting new nephews in Chitown or holding your breath as your camcorder catches your companion gaff a shark in the Sea of Cortez.

In every case, video can bring all the sights, sounds and excitement into your living room. But you don't need to be a Spielberg to know that the right tool can make a big difference in the final product. So before you rush off, checkbook in hand, to buy a camcorder as the vacation clock runs out of numbers, you should know the lay of the land. A lot of new camcorders are pointed your way. Here's our guide to the ones you may

find especially helpful on the road.

Today's camcorders break down into two basic types: simple and sophisticated. The point-and-shoot models are also fast. They do the thinking for you: Electronic circuits respond to action faster than human reflexes. In less time than it takes to say "smile," a fully automatic camcorder can focus, adjust for light and set the sound level. More sophisticated camcorders (which can also be set to run automatically) trade reaction time for versatility, and include features guaranteed to challenge your filmmaking skills.

Sony's 8mm CCD-F45 Handycam is a good example of a quick and simple shooting machine. It sets its autofocus system, white balance, shutter speed (down to 1/4000 of a second) and back-light compensator all at once when a user hits the auto lock switch. It can shoot in as little as 3 lux of light and an edit search lets users review taped segments while the unit is in record mode. It's priced at \$1,400.

Shoulder Studio:
JVC's GR-S707U
S-VHS-C camcorder
boasts a full menu of
editing features.



Sync-sation:

GE's CG 9911 VHS camcorder includes a small light and a synchro edit jack, which lets it interface with GE and RCA VCRs.



But the real story is the amazing versatility of more complex camcorders. Models of virtually every brand boast full creative menus. Stronger zoom lenses increase your reach; smarter focusing systems keep scenes sharp. Other features refine lighting exposures, help you edit tapes, and find and review specific scenes.

Probably no feature comes in for as much use on a vacation adventure as a zoom lens. Today, 6x, 8x, 10x, even 12x lenses let users swoop in for spectacular tight shots or pull back for long vistas. And macro ranges take care of really close situations.

Last year, Sharp introduced the first camcorder with a 12x variable power zoom lens. Sharp still has the feature to



itself, and this year it's offering it on its VL-L280 VHS and VL-L270 VHS camcorders, for \$2,199 and \$1,999, respectively. The 12:1 ratio is equivalent to a lens that ranges from 45 to 516 mm on a 35mm SLR camera. To ensure a fluid zoom out to the lens' maximum range, Sharp designed the lens using 16 elements divided into six groups. (Later this year, Sharp will introduce a digital zoom feature that will in effect expand the lens' range to 50:1, although at some cost to image quality in the expanded portion of the image.)

Autofocus systems are also getting upgraded. A standard infrared autofocus may misbehave when an object suddenly passes between the lens and the main subject of a shot. But not Minolta's new

Master Series-C 51 Compact VHS camcorder, which uses a passive phase detection autofocus based on the system developed by the company for its line of 35mm Maxxum cameras. The system operates through the lens and requires no infrared transmitter or receiver. As such, it is free of parallax effects and capable of continuously focusing to the surface of the lens without the aid of a separate macro level. Minolta's system automatically shortens the zoom length to maintain



Fancy Focus:
Canon's A1 Mark II
tracks moving subjects.

SHARP SHOOTERS

the continuous focusing.

We also like the way the camcorder stays focused on a subject. When a subject is in the central image area, the system bases its focus on a narrow area of the picture, but if the subject moves out of the center, the system automatically adjusts to take in a wider area. For still greater versatility, the camcorder is designed to accept four optional accessory lenses: 1.5x and 2x telephoto lenses and 0.5x and 0.65 wide-angle lenses.

Canon's new A1 Mark II Hi8 camcorder uses another autofocus approach that raises the state of the art: It's no longer necessary to keep a subject in the center of the viewfinder to keep focusing on it. If you center the subject to establish focus, an auto tracking system keeps the subject in focus as it moves within the image frame. At the same time, an auto tracking backlight control comes into play to reduce black-outs and keep details clear as the subject moves around a framing area inside the viewfinder.

EDIT AS YOU GO

These days, editing features don't just let shooters more easily manipulate their footage after a vacation ends. They offer plenty of on-the-spot advantages. Flying erase heads not only clean up transitions between scenes, they eliminate noisy scene starts. Audio and video dubbing let you go back over shot footage and add a new soundtrack or re-record a video segment. Built-in speakers—like that on Panasonic's PV-

Mix It Up:
RCA's CC311
features mic mixing.



Fuzzy Fisher:

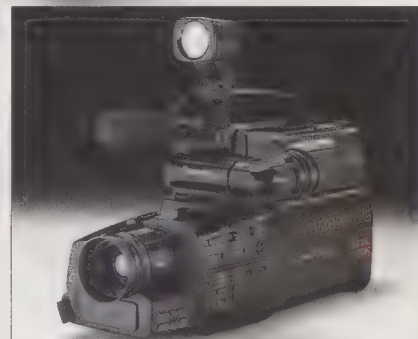
Fisher's flat new 8mm FVC-880 for \$1,299 is the first camcorder to use fuzzy logic circuits.

S550 Super VHS camcorder, among others—let you review an audio track while you review the video through the camcorder's viewfinder.

This year, RCA has packaged these and other features in its line of ProEdit camcorders, which includes such mid-price models as the CC311, for \$1,349. The ProEdit features include microphone mixing to add narration or sounds to a previously recorded audio track, edit search to precisely position the tape at the start of a new recording session, and a special jack that makes it possible to synchronize the camcorder with an RCA VCR for easier editing. JVC calls its synchro edit capability the Master Control System, and includes it in several models, including the GR-S707U S-VHS-Compact, for \$2,499. GE includes synchro edit on its CG 9911 VHS model, which also has a flying erase head, a high-speed shutter, an 8x zoom lens and 3 lux sensitivity.

Fledgling Fellinis will appreciate the VHS search recording system found on Hitachi's VM-3270A VHS camcorder, for \$1,299. The camcorder adds a signal to the tape when a user begins or resumes shooting after a long break. This provides simple segment location when viewing and editing on a VCR with an index search system.

It often happens that the more advanced a technology becomes the more difficult it is to use. But at a certain point, as the technology continues to advance, it becomes easier to use. This rule seems to apply to exposure and backlighting controls. While all cam-



Audio Advantage: Panasonic's PV-S550 includes a side-mounted speaker for reviewing audio tracks.

corders have automatic iris controls that assure correct settings under normal lighting conditions, manual controls are often added, for flexibility and creativity. This allows a shooter to open or close the iris to compensate for high contrast levels or strong backlighting.

A good example of an exposure system that is both sophisticated yet simple to use is the "correlated two field metering" system, found on Canon's A1 Mark II. The system takes separate readings of the entire image and the central zone (36 percent of the image). The readings are then integrated to determine the proper exposure ratio. For precise manual exposure control in the auto exposure lock mode, plus and minus buttons allow digital exposure compensation all the way from stopped down to fully open. For more precise control, Canon added a five-blade iris, rather than the usual two-blade variety.

Minolta's Series-C 51 camcorder also

employs a dual area auto exposure system. Again, the CCD image sensor simultaneously measures the light levels of the entire area and the central area. Exposure is continuously calculated and adjusted with emphasis given to the central area.

A new approach to exposure control, and the first to exploit artificial intelligence research, can be found in Fisher's forthcoming 8mm camcorder, for \$1,399. By using what is known as "fuzzy logic" in its aperture adjustment control, the camcorder receives indefinite exposure answers instead of the normal binary yes or no readings. Fisher says this makes the camcorder respond faster and more accurately to sudden changes in illumination.

The ten-watt color enhancement light introduced last year by Panasonic and available now on a number of camcorders means you may no longer have to spend additional money for an accessory lamp. As found on GE's CG-9911 \$1,299 camcorder, the light illuminates an area up to nine yards ahead of the camcorder. At a distance of a yard the light provides about 250 lux illumination. At nine yards, it drops to 25 lux.

The principal advantage of the light is that it helps you capture scenes just the way they are, with natural colors, crisp and realistic tones — and without the artificial brightness often found in very low lux shots. It also adds only a few ounces to your travel kit.

Hitachi's VM-3270A combines a cordless movie light with its second generation CCD II image sensor to accurately expose shots in light as low as 3 lux. Even if it is not possible to use the add-on light, the camcorder can continue to take clear images in low light.

ON THE HORIZON

But the biggest refinement continues to be size. The mini formats have had the field to themselves for awhile. Now VHS camcorders are about to become trimmer and more comfortable. A new generation of slimmer designs should debut sometime this fall. The small formats, meanwhile, will become even more compact. Hitachi announced it has a VHS-C model only 2.7 inches thick and Panasonic has one weighing only 2.2 pounds. Both have gone on sale in Japan, but neither company has revealed its plans for them in the U.S.

When camcorder makers introduced the smaller formats a few years ago, they were met with less than the rousing reception manufacturers had expected. Americans stuck to a "bigger is better" preference by choosing full-size VHS camcorders in overwhelming numbers. But 8mm seems to have caught the imagination of the buying public in recent months and, as the VHS-C camp has begun to find itself outnumbered by the competition, its champions are planning to emulate Buster Douglas and ultimately knock out 8mm.

Vacation goes in the near future will have even more refinements to add bounce to their steps. Toshiba has a new top-of-the-line VHS-C camcorder already available in Japan that the company says it will soon introduce here. Designated AI-X82 in Japan, it has a 70,000-pixel color LCD viewfinder, a 420,000-pixel CCD image sensor, and a digital autofocus system that employs artificial intelligence circuits.

Although the outcome is uncertain, one fact is not. While camcorder makers slug it out in the worldwide battle for market share, the public should be able to take advantage of unusually good deals. ■

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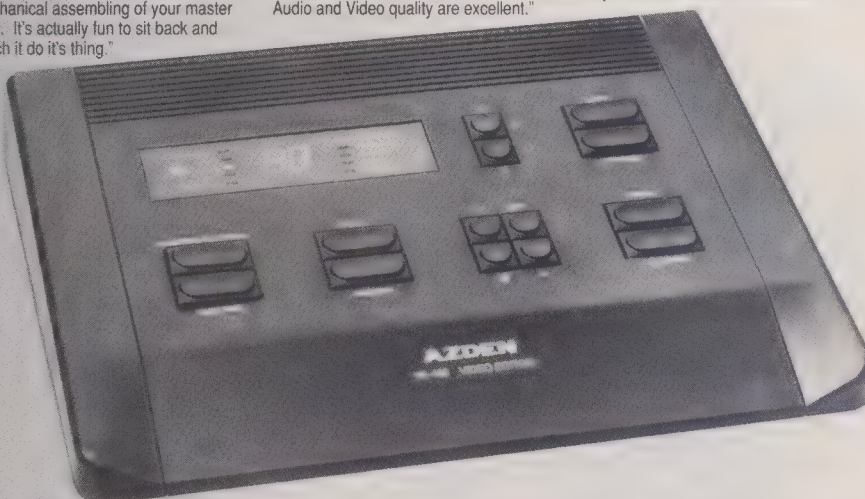
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VIDEOMAKER, March/April 1990.

"The VE-100 is incredibly accurate. Using it is relatively painless and the unit will work with almost any VCR-Camcorder combination."



The VE-100 is a pure editor, allowing you to make extremely accurate edits. Unlike many other editors, the VE-100 is compatible with virtually all VCR's having infrared remote. Easy to follow instructions have you editing within an hour or two. After hook-up, the VE-100 learns the infrared code, and then the pre-roll of your recording deck. You then make a working copy, and you're ready for "one-button editing". Change your mind

about the edit-in or edit-out point of a scene? No problem, just go back to that point and make the change. Rewind the tape, and preview your edits before final assembly (you can watch in "fast forward" to save time). Now you're ready to make the Final Mastered Tape, and during this step you can fade the audio, or add audio from an external source. Within a short time you'll be showing off those professionally edited tapes!

BY GREG SOLMAN
AND BOB BARLOW



TIPS FROM TOP PROS

Hollywood's hottest cameramen reveal their shooting secrets.

How can home moviemakers armed with only a camcorder and a few accessories get the lively, TV-type production values their audience expects? By taking a few tips from the pros. The basics of motion pictures—composition, lighting, camera angles—apply whether you're using a point-and-shoot camcorder or a Panaflex movie camera. And you'd be surprised at how many professionals shoot home video themselves.

We asked several pro cinematographers how they would spice up vacation videos. Their credits range from movies to TV, from *RoboCop* to *Murphy Brown*. The advice they gave us ranges from

film-school fundamentals to recommendations on rock-climbing shots. But whether you're planning a trek in the Himalayas or two nights in your own backyard, you're sure to find plenty in the following tips to make your summer shots sparkle.

LITTLE LEAGUE LESSONS

Robert Richardson

At presstime, cinematographer Robert Richardson had just been nominated for an Oscar for his work on *Born on the Fourth of July*. He has shot all of Oliver Stone's films—*Salvador*, *Platoon*, *Wall Street*

and *Talk Radio*—as well as a baseball movie, *Eight Men Out*, which gave him special insight into keeping Little League videos interesting:

"Start with the unexpected—maybe a tight shot of a pair of cleats, then a tilt up to the ball. High over the batter or low behind are the best positions. Think in terms of constructing a storyboard of batter and pitcher. And watch out for the bat and ball!"

"One doesn't have to bother with light adjustment on a camcorder. In *El Salvador*, I left it in automatic mode almost all the time, so that I was free to experiment with composition.



ILLUSTRATIONS: GLENN WOLFF

"If you're vacationing near the equator, use the extremely hard overhead sunlight. Rather than avoid the shadows, you can actually photograph them—they have a lot of mystery.

"Break every rule. That's important."

MAGIC HOURS

Al Maysles

In movies like *Salesman* and the *Rolling Stones'* concert film *Gimme Shelter*, cinematographer Al Maysles helped establish the "direct cinema" technique, bringing a creative touch to the documentary. He keeps the realism in outdoor shots by using natural lighting:

"There's a way to take advantage of natural light. Something misty and gloomy can be quite nice. I personally prefer a cloudy day because the colors are nicer and you have the advantage of not having too much contrast. You're not worried about shooting with the sun in back or in front of you. You have 360 degrees of great lighting.

"If you have the choice, the best time to shoot outdoors is in the early morning or late afternoon—the magic hours. It's when the light is most beautiful, most dramatic.

"My approach to shooting outdoors is to see things from a human point of view. I almost always include people in a shot, but if I can't, I try to follow something of interest, the way a human eye would. That way there's a human element, which adds interest and combats boredom."

ROCKS, WAVES & BEES

Robert Carmichael

A new breed of athlete-aesthete, director/cameraman Robert Carmichael has found himself shooting in the wake of Navy tankers and from helicopters above soaring flames. He shot the *El Capitan* scenes in *Star Trek V*, along with nearly 20 mountain climbing expeditions. He stresses safety—and involvement:

"Shooting rock or mountain climbing is a serious situation. I only recommend it for expert climbers. Observe extra safety rules. Tie your camcorder to your lines or to yourself, because it can become a lethal projectile if it falls. Pack



your bag so that removing one piece of equipment doesn't pull out another.

"For rock-climbing shots, the best camera positions accentuate the rock's vertical lines. Shooting straight up may look good through the lens, but when you put it on a screen, it looks like you could have shot it on a driveway.

"When shooting boat-to-boat, forget the tripod. Lock yourself down, using your legs as a gimbal. Tie yourself to the boat by the waist and tie the camera to you. Keep the horizon level in your viewfinder. Because you may not be used to looking through a lens while at sea, you may get seasick, so use Scopalamine—little prescription Band-Aids that go behind the ears and prevent seasickness.

"Try using Rainex, which is a solution for the lens that cuts down water viscosity so that it runs off. A nice, cheap water-resistant housing for the camcorder can be made from a plastic trash bag and gaffer's tape. The best time to shoot at sea is midday, for the deep blue of tropical areas.

"When shooting boogie-boarding or surfing, you'll get better stuff in the late afternoon, with the angle of the sun on the surf. Of course, you'll need to use a

waterproof camcorder housing. Get right in the water, immerse yourself in the activity. Wear a neoprene vest, tie the camera to you, and give it an orange flotation device.

"And if you're shooting killer bees [as he did for an upcoming movie], and there's more than 10,000 of them, wear a bee suit."

TASTY BARBECUE SHOTS

Skip Roessel

Director/cameraman Skip Roessel has shot such feature films as *Violated* and *Vamping*, and numerous award-winning commercials. He suggests a few ways to turn backyard barbecue attendees into video stars:

"There's a reason why we have that stereotype in our heads of the director yelling 'Great, baby!' after every shot. First of all, they really do say it. Second, they say it because it works. Whether you're shooting a feature film or a barbecue, you've got to give the people on camera continuous positive feedback.

"Don't shoot too long. After a subject says a few words, or gives you an engaging look, stop, drop the camera and tell him how terrific he was. If you don't, people start avoiding you like the plague.

"If you can't get subjects to react to anything, switch to being a director and elicit a reaction from them. At a barbecue, for instance, get somebody to take a bite of food and make some kind of face."

BEACH-BLANKET VIDEO

James Contner

In his depiction of the noirish Deco district of Miami Vice, director/cinematographer James Contner influenced American styles. He also shot *The Flamingo Kid*, *Nighthawks*, *Cruising* and the first year of *Crime Story*. Lately, he's been directing *Wiseguy* for CBS. Contner recommends using manual controls to counter bright beach light conditions:

"I like manual features and don't like electronic zoom. Even on a beach, I like to shoot backlight, but an automatic camera may not expose properly for that. So use the backlight compensator, or if there's a manual iris, open it up an

PRO TIPS

extra stop and a half. Use a white card you can buy at any art store for fill. You can set up a nice bounce with a beach umbrella.

"If you're going for the *Miami Vice* look, bear in mind that the look of those shows was highly manipulated. There are certain colors to stay away from. Red has a lot of bleed and leaks away from the edge. Avoid bright yellow unless it's part of a pattern. Bright colors in a lot of light will detract from skin tone. Go with deeper blues unless you are in a controlled situation where you can decrease the light."

NEWS UNDER THE SUN

Paul Stojanovich

It's unlikely neophyte newshounds will get to do what Paul Stojanovich, producer/cameraman of the TV show Cops, gets to do every week—as he puts it, "roll with the cops when the shit hits the fan." For amateur news shooting, he recommends keeping the camcorder still and letting the action unfold:

"When shooting quick movement, shoot wide. Don't erratically pan—it's an over-response to the situation. Settle back, take a breath, and let the action work within the frame. The firehose method [trying to cover everything] doesn't work.

"Move in closer, rather than zoom. Wide-angle adapters let you capture action from close up. It's far more exciting being right next to the event. People can see you were close when they watch the video.

"Bring along a second person to handle sound and lights. Get someone to bring your light to the side. By not mounting the light on the camera, you avoid that hard, news look. Bypass the microphone on the camera. Get a decent directional mic and you'll be surprised at the results."

AN EYE ON THE KIDS

Caleb Deschanel

Director/cinematographer Caleb Deschanel is a master of slow-motion, using it extensively in The Black Stallion and The Natural. He doesn't always win an Oscar, as he did for The Right Stuff, but he often deserves one. He counsels on how to cap-



ture kids on video and effectively use slo-mo (which some camcorders and VCRs can do during playback):

"Amateurs tend to stand over and look down on kids, which diminishes the impact. Get down on the ground and get among them, into their world. Get steeped in the atmosphere of what you're doing: Try an involved point of view, rather than a detached one. Don't always stay where it's easiest to get the shot.

"Because video is cheap, let it run until you get tired. Don't try to cut in frame. If you cut short, you'll inevitably find yourself wishing you had let it run longer.

"Slow motion is surprising in the grace it lends things, the poetry of motion. The obvious place to use it is in sports, but I recommend using it in the least obvious places. For instance, in *The Natural*, we shot slow motion of a very slight movement of Barbara Hershey's eyes, to call attention to her gaze."

COPY THE CINEMA

Sol Negrin

Emmy-nominated and Clio-winning director of photography Sol Negrin's work runs from sensitive dramas like St. Elsewhere to fast action flicks like RoboCop

and Superman. He feels that to make good home movies, you should watch great Hollywood movies:

"The usual thing an amateur does is zoom in and out, and pan around until the viewer is disoriented. My advice is: be conservative, use a tripod and follow the rules. I mean do it like they do on TV. Watch TV and movies and you'll soon learn that they're mostly made up of sequences of clean, clear wide shots, medium shots and close-ups—without much camera movement. You'll also notice that shots are held long enough to let the viewer grasp everything.

"Let predictable events script themselves. I don't care if it's a birthday party or a cookout, when you're shooting something that has a built-in, natural procedure, take advantage of it. Shoot it in sequence and edit in-camera. At a birthday party, start with the birthday kid getting dressed up, then the friends coming, then the natural rowdiness that goes on, the presents, the cake and all the little moments in between. Go from a natural beginning to a natural middle to a natural end."

Greg Solman is Senior Editor of Millimeter Magazine. Bob Barlow is a freelance writer who has written about video for nearly a decade.

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BY JAMES CARUSO
AND MAVIS ARTHUR

DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT THEM

Bags, mics, lenses, lights: candidates for your camcorder survival kit.

Camcorders and vacations go together like Siskel and Ebert, binoculars and hiking trails, snorkeling gear and shallow reefs. But do camcorders go equally well with *your* vacation—or do they make you feel like Chevy Chase taking the Griswolds on yet another Lagoon fiasco? If so, they shouldn't. The plain truth is that you and your family can have a great time while shooting video footage you'll all enjoy long after the actual events.

A little planning and a few accessories—some necessary, some optional—will go a long way toward helping you perform like the filmmaker you always thought you could have been. What follows are our suggestions for the essential camcorder survival kit, tips and gadgets (from carrying cases to microphones) guaranteed to help you bring a vacation back on tape and ready to roll.

Before you start collecting accessories, get to know your camcorder—this means everyone likely to use it during the vacation. If you've had it awhile, you're probably past this point. But if you're buying a camcorder just before a trip, take some time to put the machine through its paces. Read the manual, charge the battery, load a tape and start pushing buttons. Check out the viewfinder legends, try some camera moves while audibly narrating the action, snap a sequence of very short scenes, then watch the tape you've made. If you're unhappy with the way it looks or how you sound, practice some more. Videotape is cheap and reusable.



Next, make sure the camcorder will be accessible when it's wanted. We know a couple who drove 3,000 miles across the country for a vacation, but kept their camcorder packed with the luggage in the car's trunk. They can describe their trip, but not play it.

You'll want to do both, so find a carrying case flexible enough to hold the camcorder and essential accessories. Selecting a case is an important decision because the case should do more than just contain equipment. It should be light enough to carry anywhere all day long, for example, and small enough to fit under an airline seat. Here are some other questions to consider:

- Does the compartment that holds the camcorder cushion it from other things in the bag?
- Is access to the camcorder easy? Can you just reach in and grab it without setting the case down?
- Will the top of the case stay closed without the latch or the zipper being fastened?
- Is the carrying strap securely attached and padded where it's likely to pass over a shoulder or around a waist?
- Are there enough compartments to protect the accessories and still leave room for additions?
- Does the case have all the features you want and not weigh more than the things going inside it?

In general, you can go with either a hard case or a soft case. The hard case is not our choice mainly because the answers to many of the above

continued on page 108

Road Ready:

Cullman's Magic II tripod (below) folds flat and converts into a monopod; RCA's four polarizing and special effect filters (above and center) come in a kit for \$60; and Lenmar's VQ205 lens (center) flips from wide-angle to telephoto.





Travel Partners:
Sima's CamPocket (top) comes sized for large and small camcorders, for \$47 and \$37, respectively; Azden's VM-30 wireless mic includes a receiver and lapel-type transmitter (center) and a hand mic (above); and RCA's VDC 200 video light, for \$169, has a self-contained battery.

DAN WAGNER

BY WARREN BERGER

DESIGNS FOR LIVING

Will hi-tech help video break the style barrier? You better believe it.

Video design? Until very recently, that's been a contradiction in terms. Architects of everything from cars to Cuisinarts have long lamented the sad state of video equipment design — square black boxes indistinguishable from one another, messy arrays of buttons and switches, bright, flashing displays. Design experts don't knock the sophisticated technology behind all those pedestrian cosmetics — the problem is one of style.

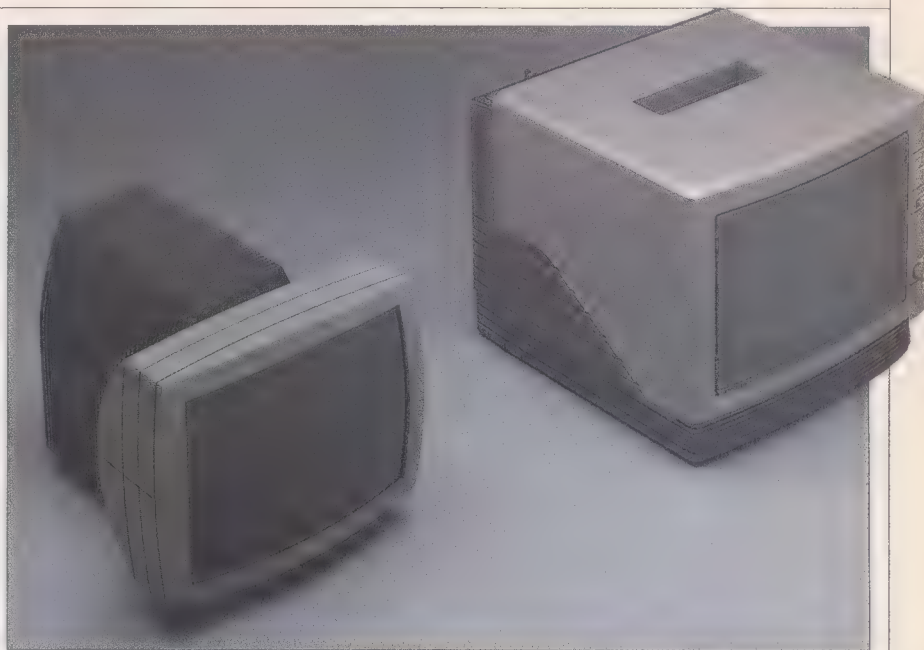
"The fact is, video technology has



Flat Shooter: GE prototype for a camcorder designed to lie flat on a user's shoulder and feel less bulky.



Button Down Look: Prototype (left) and available Mitsubishi remotes simplify complex control needs.



Mod for Each Other: RCA design for ■ modular electronics back (top, left) shows how to shrink a standard TV (top, right), while Patton Design's Video Translator turns ■ screen into ■ drafting table.



been so innovative in recent years that companies didn't feel the need to bother with design," says renowned industrial designer Morrison Cousins of the Cousins Design Group. "That's about to change." Indeed, a new era of video design is upon us, and the black boxes may never again look the same. The full visual and functional impact of the current design movement is expected to be felt over the next two years. And, say a range of product stylists engaged in video design, this is no artsy fad in which a new color or pattern is being slapped on the shell of yesterday's TV set or VCR. The video design revolution will bring profound changes—new shapes, new styles, new functions and new modes of interaction.

Designers are already hard at work on radical new packages to house video technology now available or just around the corner. TV sets without screen frames, compact-yet-uncluttered VCRs

that are simple to program, button-free remotes resembling computer mouse controls—these and other projects are on the drawing boards at video design houses in America, Europe and Japan. Meanwhile, less revolutionary design changes are increasingly visible in products now coming on the market: Softer, more stylish shapes and smarter ergonomics characterize the new style.

While video design has always taken a backseat to technology, video equipment manufacturers now recognize that the times are a-changing. Consumers are more sophisticated about design—whether in homes, cars or TV sets—than ever before. "Video companies are beginning to perceive design as a way to stand out from the pack," says David Tompkins, longtime RCA designer who now heads the design center at Himont, a plastics corporation. "They see that

good design can provide the competitive edge."

And video companies are following in the footsteps of a number of other industries which began several years ago to place more emphasis on design. Strange though it may seem, the successes of the Ford Taurus and Mazda Miata are affecting what your next TV or VCR may look like. "The modern look in video is definitely being influenced by the car industry—the rounded, aerodynamic design is being used in video because it looks friendlier," says Aki Amanuma, vice president of Sony's American design center.

The Taurus/Miata effect can already be seen in many new VCRs and TV sets, which are quickly losing sharp corners in

DESIGNS

favor of the new soft and round look. "Hard" colors are being softened, as well, with black melting to dark gray. The softening of video will continue to be the predominant cosmetic trend in the next couple of years, according to most designers.

But look for style changes to go far beyond rounded edges. Designer Cousins says he's seen the future face of video in the sketches of young designers—including those who compete in Sony's annual student design contest. "These young people are interested in robust designs, with lots of personality. And video companies are ready to listen, because they're all anxious to begin making design statements. Some of those statements will be pretty bold."

How bold? For one thing, expect designers to begin playing

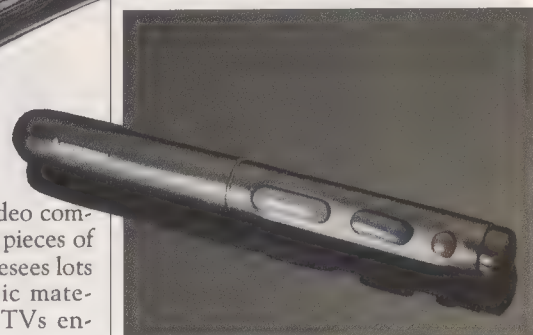
with the shapes of TV screens and VCRs, says industrial designer Doug Patton, who works with Mitsubishi and other video companies.



Best Face Forward:
Fiat Blaupunkt TV set with a fashion front.



All Features Great and Small:
RCA concept for a 34-inch high-definition TV console with a wide screen (left) and a variant of Mitsubishi's pen-size remote control (below).



"There's a new awareness of video components as art objects, not just pieces of equipment," he says. Patton foresees lots of experimentation with classic materials—you may see VCRs or TVs encased in marble, for example.

Screens seem to offer unlimited artistic possibilities. In Europe, designers are creating "fashion plates" that frame television screens with wild artistic patterns, including splashes of paint à la Jackson Pollack. Grundig showed several such models at a recent Berlin video show. Conventional wisdom holds that Americans won't go for such avant-garde concepts. Not true, say designers like Bill Plumb of Plumb, Pearson Inc. "Americans have become much more receptive to European-style design," Plumb says, adding that the U.S. market is ready for some bold new looks. One new design expected to have an influence comes from European auto maker Porsche, which has designed a radical television set for Grundig that is virtually frameless.

The glass front on the screen curves sharply at the edges, then simply ends with no border.

The Grundig set looks a bit space-age, but addresses an issue that TV designers are interested in—getting rid of, or at least minimizing, the frame around the TV picture. "A lot of new TV design is trying to get rid of the mask around the screen," says Jon Stone of Bang & Olufsen. "That cuts down on distraction, and creates the appearance of a small set when it's turned off." At Mitsubishi, a similar philosophy is at work: "With monitors, we're striving to get rid of displays on the front panel...they distract from the picture," says Mitsubishi's Leo Delaney. "We prefer to use the picture tube to display information."

While streamlining the front of the TV, designers are also reshaping the sides and back. John Bocko, director of

Warren Berger is a freelance writer living in Brooklyn who has written for The New York Times, Manhattan, inc. and Stereo Review among other publications.

'Video companies are ready to make design statements. Some will be bold.'

design for Philips in the U.S., says "there's now a 360-degree approach to TV design. In the past, the only part considered important was the front of the TV, so it would look good on the store shelf. But in the Japanese market, TVs have always been designed to look good sitting in the middle of the floor...that look is now infiltrating the U.S."

Bang & Olufsen is a leader in this area. Not only has the company introduced a model designed to look good from all angles, B&O's MX 5000 features a motorized stand that changes the position and angle of the TV. The idea is to create a piece of electronic furniture that fits neatly in the room, whether it's on or off.

At Thomson Consumer Electronics (RCA, GE), the shape of future TV sets is taking dramatic new forms. The prototype versions of one nine-inch set feature a modular design approach; the back of the set consists of a compact chassis encased in a "modular" backpack, which could be paired with a large or small picture tube. The backpack is designed to include all operational con-

trols, leaving the set's front panel clean and uncluttered.

Another advanced RCA design centers on a 20-inch monitor (also with streamlined chassis) which has cylindrical hi-fi speakers attached to the rear. Modular sets, which may be ready for introduction by 1992, are designed to be "more portable and more adaptable to placement in a small place," says Thomson design director Lou Lenzi. The sets feature a soft gray textured finish. "We think that look will be replacing the higher gloss blacks and the artificial woodgrains," Lenzi says.

According to Lenzi, the look will probably extend to consoles. Sketches of possible future designs show consoles that are lower and wider (to create a horizontal theater effect), with exteriors made from plastics or metals in soft colors. "Consoles will begin to look more like floorstanding table models," according to Lenzi.

The movement to alter television cabinetry involves other factors. B&O is offering TV set exteriors in five colors, venturing into an area of styling and cosmetics where television set makers

Video Window:
RCA design for a 50-inch wall-mounted TV set that uses LCDs for the screen.



Control Tower: Prototype "power pillar" containing video and audio discs activated by voice commands.

have gone before, with decidedly mixed results. Zenith, for instance, was one of several companies that offered sets in a variety of bright colors a few years ago. "They never caught on," says a company spokesman. "I think the concern among purchasers has been that, if they change their wallpaper, they're stuck with something that doesn't match."

There are indeed risks involved with using color in video design—as Cousins points out, young designers would like to bring color in, but buyers of video equipment tend to be more conservative. "People still think of video equipment as furniture, which affects their attitude toward color more than form," Cousins says. "Fashionable colors would have to be used carefully—on details—because the overall design must be able to fit in with a wide variety of furniture. Look for computer colors—ivory, tan and so on—to become more popular."

The computer influence on video will go far beyond color, according to major designers, who see the integration of computer and video technology as a major shaping force in the years ahead. The latest designs coming out of the Patton Design Group labs depict a new breed of video monitor which will serve a number of functions—entertainment



medium, communications tool, even work of art.

Working with Apple Computer design manager Jim Stewart, Patton has created visual mock-ups of a video monitor dubbed the Translator, which resembles a large floorstanding, frameless piece of glass when turned off. When turned on, the LCD screen would work with a connecting "power pillar" containing a stack of video and audio discs.

Using voice command, the user would determine which of the loaded discs would be played; one disc might contain images of paintings or breathtaking views, which could be left on the screen when there was no movie to be watched. The same screen would also be hooked to a computer and teleconferencing system. "The idea is to bring it all together into one system—you'll be able to do anything on one screen," says Patton.

And there will be smaller versions of the screen, known as "pads," which can be carried around and docked in various stations (called "peds") around the house, in the car or at the office. The mini-screen can even be made to dock into the arm of a chair; the "Com-chair arm screen" then swivels open and rests in front of the chair, much like an old-fashioned school desk.

"The merging of computer design and video design is probably only a couple of years away," says designer Bill Plumb. At that point, designers will have a whole new set of options. "The video screen may fill an entire wall, and may give you a view of the Alps when you're not watching a video."

The Patton designs show high tech screens in a very clean and simple package; there are few buttons or readouts. "That will be the trend in video in the years ahead," Patton says. "The industrial high tech look is rapidly becoming outdated. We'll be moving toward techno-minimalism."

It's already happening with VCRs as manufacturers struggle to find ways to simplify a product considered too complicated by many consumers. "If there's one single product about which I've heard the most complaints of over-complicated design, it's got to be the VCR," says Cousins.

Simplification isn't so simple—VCR owners do, after all, like most of those little features that lead to complications. Still, designers say there are ways to clean them up without eliminating user benefits. Leo Delaney of Mitsubishi suggests "simple things, such as better illumination and more differentiation of function buttons."

Many VCRs now on the market feature sub-panel controls that are crowded together, in similar shapes and sizes, with no illumination—"they become almost impossible to operate without a flashlight," Delaney points out. Similarly, identical power and eject buttons are often placed next to each other, frequently leading users to turn VCRs off when they intended to eject a cassette, and vice versa. Delaney says clearly distinguishable "smart" buttons are needed to rectify the problems.

Designers are also working to simplify displays on VCRs, many of which offer too much information spread across almost the entire width of the

front panel.

In trying to clean up VCR front panels, attempts have been made to hide as many functions as possible; many VCRs designed for the Japanese market hide the cassette door itself behind a panel. But while there's room to hide functions on the component, hiding them on the remote, where space is at a premium, is another matter.

In fact, simplifying remote controls is one of the toughest challenges facing video designers today. To reduce the number of buttons, designers are focusing on "macro-operation" by incorporating more than one function into one button.

Still, there's only so much melding of functions possible; many designers feel the real solution is to remove functions from the remote and nest them in on-screen menus, leaving only basic functions such as stop/play/rewind on the remote. Mitsubishi's Pen Remote is an example of such streamlining. "The Pen Remote represents the minimal amount of information needed to get the job done," says Patton, who designed the piece. "We think that's the trend in remote design."

Patton and others say they won't be satisfied until the remote becomes a one-button mouse. "A remote mouse is definitely on the way," Patton says. "It's insane to think someone can operate a computer with one button but needs 58 buttons to operate an A/V system." Indeed, at last year's Berlin audio/video fair, two firms showed one-button remote prototypes.

There is, however, a downside to re-

continued on page 112

SOME CALL THIS VCR INGENIOUS... WE CALL IT A NECESSITY



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BY TIMOTHY ONOSKO

READY STEADY GO

Few filmmakers can truthfully claim to have changed the way movies look and feel. Garrett Brown can. Now he's promising to do the same for home videos.

Brown is the inventor of the Steadicam, an ingenious device that lets hand-held movie cameras duplicate the fluid energy, grace and power of complex crane and dolly shots. After spending a decade as an Oscar- and Emmy-winning Steadicam operator, Brown has devised a way to downsize the Steadicam to give small camcorders the same freedom of action.

The Steadicam JR (as in "jay are," not "junior") is an unusual-looking device that can be used in folded and unfolded positions. The top serves as a platform for 8mm, Hi8 or Compact VHS camcorders. A long arm that hangs beneath the platform ends in a battery compartment, which serves as a counterweight to balance the mass of the camcorder. A black & white LCD monitor, which acts as a viewfinder, rests in a joint in the center of the arm. All of it balances gracefully on a unique "intergimballed" joint directly above a simple pistol grip.

In use, the camcorder seems to float in the air, isolated from an operator's movements and imparting to amateur videos the smooth motions previously available only to pro cinematographers. The results are, as Brown describes them, "fairly amazing."

Learning to use the Steadicam JR takes a little time, and it's not for everyone, or even everyday use, but the end product—great looking video—may change people's perception about the usefulness of little camcorders. It addresses one of the chief complaints about them—that they are so light they're hard to hold still. The Steadicam JR also has the potential to give tiny camcorders a new advantage over full-size VHS models, which are too heavy to accept Brown's invention.

Two years ago, several video companies introduced camcorders with electronic anti-jiggle systems. Tiny motors surrounding the lens moved the lens to partially counteract the effect of un-

steady shooting. They worked well, but not nearly as dramatically as the Steadicam JR, and were only available on a handful of full-size models. The original Steadicam was designed for 35mm film cameras. It weighed about 90 pounds and strapped onto the operator like a vest. Although a great success, it was more even than most professional photographers could handle

and, at \$40,000, more than most could afford. The Steadicam JR weighs about two pounds and is priced at \$579.

However, the JR is a true descendant of Brown's original invention. Like its predecessor, the Steadicam JR relies on a mounting platform that is isolated from the photographer's movements. Framing and viewfinding are performed with the external video monitor, in this case a four-inch LCD with proprietary "transflexive" coatings that protect the image from washing out in bright sunlight. (The monitor is almost identical to that used in a third, much more expensive Steadicam designed for professional Betacam videographers.)

The Steadicam JR floats and seemingly flies about its subjects, enabling surprisingly smooth pans, tilts and other mobile camera shots. It doesn't just take

*Garrett Brown's
new invention
promises to cure
the video jitters.*



Flying Wedge:
Inventor Garrett Brown demonstrates the Steadicam JR with an 8mm camcorder.

READY, STEADI

the "shake" out of a stationary, hand-held, zoomed-in shot like some recent electronically stabilized camcorders. It opens the world of professional cinematographic motion to amateur videographers.

In a second configuration, the JR folds into a shoulder rest. This gives the owner of an 8mm or VHS-C camcorder the stability familiar to owners of larger camcorders. However, in this mode, the JR does not offer the motion-damping smoothness it has when "flying."

One caveat, lest anyone think the Steadicam JR can instantly transform a poor, shaky videographer into a rock-steady professional. The device requires a thorough understanding of the principles of balance and mechanical isolation on which it is based. And learning how to use it, followed by much practice, is required.

Thankfully, a one-hour training video, hosted by Brown, comes with the JR. Brown is a master of the Steadicam, having begun development on it almost 20 years ago while producing film segments for advertisements. "I come from a long line of Victorian inventors and engineers," says Brown. "It's in the blood. My father has half a dozen patents. He invented the stuff that binds paperback books. I always did film rigs and special effects, and I always loved smooth camera movement—the Hollywood kind of shooting that required enormous cranes and rails."

Brown started experimenting in 1971. After three years, he came up with a satisfying prototype. "At that point," he recalls, "I was so in debt from developing the Steadicam that I had to sell it." Cinema Products, which picked up the license, spent another 18 months developing it and released it in 1976. Meanwhile, Brown used the prototype to start shooting movies.

OSCAR BOUND

Haskell Wexler, the cinematographer on George Lucas' *American Graffiti* and director of *Medium Cool*, a '60s cult hit, saw the Steadicam at Cinema Products' office. He suggested using it on a feature he was about to shoot, Hal Ashby's *Bound for Glory*, in which actor David Carradine portrays American folk hero Woody Guthrie.



Kid Brother: The two-pound JR is significantly smaller and lighter than the pro video Steadicam (inset).

'Watching someone shoot with the JR is like watching a dance movement.'

"The scene that caught people's attention," says Brown, "was the one in which Carradine wakes up in the morning and walks through a migrant camp, past 900 extras. I rode down into the scene on a Chapman crane, stepped to the ground and followed Carradine as he got off a pickup truck. That type of shot has become legion since. It's a tricky bit of business because if you leave the crane before someone else counterbalances it, it becomes a catapult."

Bound for Glory won Oscars for Wexler, Brown and Cinema Products. It also opened the doors for Brown to create some of the most memorable shots in modern movie history. Brown has used the Steadicam on almost 200 features, with scenes that include the famous run up the steps of the Philadelphia Art Museum in *Rocky* and Jack Nicholson's crazed pursuit of his son in the snowy maze of Stanley Kubrick's *The Shining*.

One of the most famous Steadicam shots doesn't even look like one. For George Lucas' *Return of the Jedi*, Brown walked through a redwood forest with the camera cranking at a slow speed.

When projected at a normal frame rate, with images of Empire soldiers atop flying bike props matted over it, the shot looks like a daring low-altitude flight through the tree trunks.

"I was the operator on all the early films," Brown claims, since for a time there was only one Steadicam. Gradually, other Steadicams and other people came along. And Brown trained almost all of them. "We have a professional association of 170 Steadicam operators. They're kind of the cowboys of the camera departments."

Brown started working on the Steadicam JR, which has the potential to produce a few thousand more, in 1987. "First I tried to shrink the big Steadicam. That was a disaster. Camcorders are smaller, but operators aren't, and their hands aren't. So you can't just scale the thing down." It required another invention, Brown's inter-gimballed handle.

The handle is basically a ball joint atop which the Steadicam platform, monitor and counterbalance ride. Two trimming knobs on the platform let users precisely adjust placement of the camcorder. In practice, a videographer grips the JR with one hand and controls its direction and movement with two fingers of the other. Shots are framed by looking at the LCD monitor, above which an oil-filled bubble indicator, like those on a carpenter's level, shows whether the camcorder is aligned with the horizon.

SHOOTING ON THE RUN

Watching someone shoot with the Steadicam JR is like watching a choreographed dance movement as the opera-

tor moves independently of the floating camera. Brown contends this also makes the camcorder friendlier to its subjects. "A great deal of the fun of the Steadicam JR is its reach, the range of positions it can cover from ground level to over your head," explains Brown. "The camera can be ahead of you or behind you or reach through a group of people. Since you're holding it in your hand, people feel safer when you're around."

"If you have one eye covered, people shy away because they know instinctively that you may bump into them or stumble. It's a friendly device because both your eyes are uncovered. You are there as a person, face to face."

Not to be forgotten in the Steadicam JR package is a little bonus—a tiny fill light powered by the batteries that run the monitor. It's called an Obie, after ac-



Parade Rest: The Steadicam folded for shoulder-based shooting, and a close-up of the LCD viewfinder (inset).

trepreneur Merle Oberon, for whom this type of light was developed. The advantage of using an Obie instead of a conventional video light is that it perfectly matches the low-light performance ca-

pabilities of CCD camcorders, says Brown. Standard video lights, he says, tend to be too bright. Because of this they disturb the balance between subject and background when automatic gain controls take over. The gentler, filtered Obie brings out an individual's features when they're set against a bright background.

The JR also includes a small toggle switch on the balance arm. The switch overrides a camcorder's record/pause button so that the hand operating the Steadicam can easily start and halt individual shots. The switch works with all camcorders except Sony's, which use a complex digital control system instead of simple on/off switches. Brown says Cinema Products is trying to solve this problem.

The Steadicam JR comes with everything it needs to operate: four C batteries, cables to attach the monitor and the Obie light to the camcorder, and the instruction tape.

It's difficult to remain immune from the enthusiasm Brown shows for his latest invention. "It's intoxicating to shoot with because it's so radical," he says. "It's so different from what the average person is used to. The only way to describe what using it is like is to compare it to what happens in professional Steadicam workshops. You see these euphoric looks on people's faces when they begin to get this—when they feel the power they suddenly have in their hands." ■

Go With The Flow— 5 Tips For Using The JR

While it's easy to learn how to use the Steadicam JR, it takes practice to master the new way of shooting that suddenly becomes possible. Here are some tips from Garrett Brown on how best to tackle the Steadicam challenge. (For more shooting hints, see "Tips from Top Pros" elsewhere in this issue.)

- Attach the camcorder and adjust the trim dials to balance the Steadicam's counterweight. This takes a while the first time you do it, but proper balance eliminates a natural tendency of the counterweight to swing or roll on the horizon.

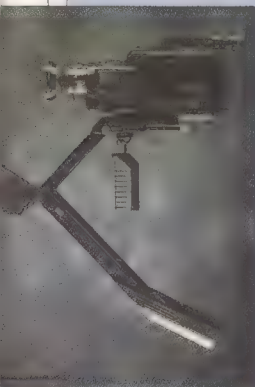
- Use both hands together to control the Steadicam—one to grip it and one to guide the motion. This essential technique lets you move the camcorder as quickly or slowly as you like.

- Don't let the Steadicam drift aimlessly like a guppy in a tank. Plan your shots and then think ahead. Once you have an idea of what you want a shot to look like, start moving the Steadicam a little before the shot will start and mentally prepare to end before the shot does.

- Learn how to do nothing. If you like the way a shot is working out, leave it alone. This means restraining your guiding hand from slightly or inadvertently applying force.

- Concentrate on three things: the image within your frame, the camera level, and navigating the camcorder. Where are you going? What's next? Are there obstacles to overcome? As you master this technique, you'll feel the experience of shooting with a camcorder gradually become more exhilarating.

—TO



Steadicam JR

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PROGRAMMING

Film of the Month



Miracle Man:
Kevin Costner, Amy Madigan and Gaby Hoffman welcome the return of Shoeless Joe Jackson (Ray Liotta, above) in *Field of Dreams*.



Field of Dreams

1989. Kevin Costner, Amy Madigan, James Earl Jones, Burt Lancaster; wr./dir. Phil Alden Robinson. 106m. (PG) Hi ss cc no list price. LV \$34.98. MCA. V image: good.

Most fantasy films fail before they ever really get started, wasting our time with false emotion and painful clichés. But Phil Alden Robinson's remarkable *Field of Dreams* manages to avoid these ever-present pitfalls. It explores its potentially sappy themes—forgiveness, redemption and learning to come to terms with the past—with grace and aplomb. It tugs on a few heartstrings, but ever so gently, and never without purpose or for the sake of sentimentality.

With its endless stream of implausible plot turns, *Field of Dreams* might have fallen apart at almost any time. Farmer Ray Kinsella (Costner) hears a disembodied voice in his Iowa cornfield: "If you build it, he will come." Ray soon

believes it's a baseball diamond he's supposed to build, so that Shoeless Joe Jackson—the brilliant (and long dead) outfielder from the disgraced 1919 Chicago "Black Sox" team, suspended from baseball for allegedly agreeing to throw the World Series—can somehow return to play the game he loved.

Things only get more complicated when Ray's fantasy comes true. Sacrificing part of his crop for the diamond puts Ray in danger of losing the farm. Meanwhile, another message from the fields inspires Ray to travel to Boston in search of Terence Mann (James Earl Jones), a former political activist and writer who has given up all hope along with his status as a public figure. After picking up another ex-ballplayer, "Doc" Graham (Burt Lancaster), our heroes return to Iowa for a baseball game that clears up many of the film's mysteries and illuminates all its themes.

Though the plot sounds silly and convoluted on paper, Robinson's cogent

script (adapted from W.P. Kinsella's novel, *Shoeless Joe*) and seamless direction make it work perfectly on screen. Unlike other films of its type—including any number of Steven Spielberg productions—it refuses to revel in its own sense of wonder, to stop and marvel at its own achievements. It succeeds on a purely emotional level because it is utterly unself-conscious. Humor, not pathos, propels the story.

Field of Dreams also relies heavily on its wonderful cast. James Earl Jones was born to play the brilliant but embittered recluse, and Amy Madigan is clearly in her element as Ray's understanding wife and Iowa's resident free spirit. Even the ubiquitous Kevin Costner shines here as never before, alternately overwhelmed and resolute as the beleaguered Ray. Despite all its attributes, the movie seems more than the sum of its parts. Because its heart is in the right place—and not on its sleeve—*Field of Dreams* hits home.

—Kenneth Korman



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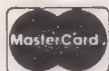
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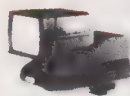
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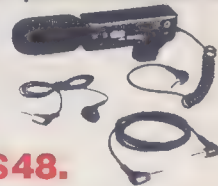
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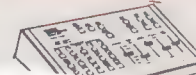
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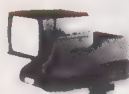
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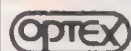
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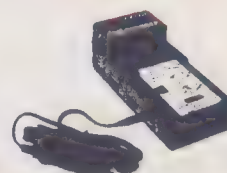


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Drama

That crooked mouth...those sleepy eyes...her edgy voice.... Ellen Barkin would have been deemed too offbeat for stardom a few decades ago, but today she's one of the screen's hottest performers. Given the right vehicle, anyway: In the scary romantic thriller *Sea of Love*, Barkin parlays a little body language and a few sultry phrases into an unsettling portrayal of a woman who may be a homicidal psychotic.

Though Barkin's charisma gives the film its charge, *Sea* is ostensibly Al Pacino's show. Playing divorced New York City police detective Frank Keller, he betrays the damage of 20 years on the force, practically staggering from scene to scene in a depressed alcoholic haze. On the trail of a killer who chooses victims from the classifieds of a singles magazine, Keller falls into a torrid affair with Helen (Barkin), one of his prime suspects. While this alluring blonde may well be the "doer," in police lingo, the cop ignores the warning signs. For the first time in years, he feels alive.

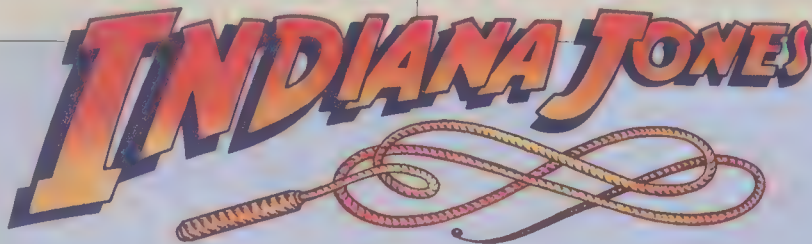
A weary demeanor and lethargic delivery make Pacino a convincing burn-out, even if his semi-articulate mannerisms verge on self-parody. For better or worse, he's sometimes overwhelmed by Barkin, whose ravenous sexuality heightens the aura of danger. Amiable John Goodman, as Keller's sidekick,



All's Fair...
Eriksson (Michael J. Fox) protects the battered Oahn (Thuy Thu Lee) in *Casualties of War* (above), while Helen (Ellen Barkin) takes care of herself in *Sea of Love* (left).

plays nicely off the somnolent leading man.

But Richard Price's script sports serious holes. Keller's reluctance to face the truth about his lover becomes more implausible as evidence against her mounts; the killer's identity turns out to be a cheat as well. Still, director Harold Becker and crew excel in bringing a sense of menace to the familiar, from a casual kiss to the dreamy '59 hit that



Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

1989. Harrison Ford, Sean Connery, Alison Doody, Denholm Elliott; dir. Steven Spielberg. 126m. (PG-13) Hi ss cc S-VHS let. \$39.95. LV let. or scanned \$29.95. VHS (with/without sp.), Beta, 8mm, all scanned, \$24.95. Paramount. V image: S-VHS, excel; VHS, good.

Paramount was the first video label to release major titles in hi-fi and

at collectible prices, so it should come as no surprise that Paramount is behind the astonishing five-format/seven-version release of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Because this constitutes the first Super VHS release of a major motion picture at a "sell through" price—and because S-VHS seems the most likely successor to VHS as the rental medium of choice—we have decided to focus on these two formats for review. And

continued on page 80

REVIEWED

SEA OF LOVE

1989. Al Pacino, Ellen Barkin, John Goodman; dir. Harold Becker. 113m. (R) Hi ss cc no list price. LV \$34.98. MCA. V image: excel.

JOHNNY HANDSOME

1989. Mickey Rourke, Ellen Barkin, Forrest Whitaker; dir. Walter Hill. 96m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.95. IVE. V image: good.

CASUALTIES OF WAR

1989. Michael J. Fox, Sean Penn; dir. Brian DePalma. 120m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.95. LV \$34.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: good.

HEART OF DIXIE

1989. Ally Sheedy, Phoebe Cates, Treat Williams; dir. Martin Davidson. 96m. (PG) Hi ss cc \$89.98. Orion. V image: fair.

supplies the film's title. *Sea of Love* is no masterpiece, but it's effective.

Barkin and a slew of other talents are wasted in *Johnny Handsome*, Walter Hill's awkward attempt at a dark character study. Mickey Rourke, in yet another seedy part, plays the title role of a disfigured criminal only slightly less hideous than the Elephant Man. Taking the fall for his partners in a robbery, Johnny ends up in the custody of a surgeon (Forrest Whitaker) who gives him a new, normal face—the better to exact revenge from his betrayers once he's out of jail.

Rourke's catatonic presence sabotages any hope of a good sleazy crime melodrama. His John Sedley remains cool and enigmatic before and after the transformation; there's little hint of pleasure or pain, making it difficult to respond on any level. The supporting players at least blow off steam. Trusty Morgan Freeman plays a skeptical cop with his usual flair; Elizabeth McGovern projects drab sincerity as Johnny's only friend. Barkin and Lance Henriksen pull out all the stops as double-crossing bad guys, cursing, snarling and committing acts of casual brutality with cartoon gusto. Too bad their manic treachery clashes so severely with Rourke's drab persona. Add erratic pacing and abrupt editing, and you've got a case of failed trash. Trash must be the last thing on

continued on page 80

BY SOL LOUIS SIEGEL

Comedy

Breaking In made a shockingly quick exit from theaters last fall—audiences apparently weren't prepared for a caper flick without stupid cops, car chases or high technology. They certainly weren't ready for Burt Reynolds' crisp, quiet performance—his best in a decade—as Ernie, an aging safecracker. One night, Ernie's about to attack a wall safe when he's interrupted by young Mike (Casey Siemaszko), who's broken into the same house for the heck of it. Recognizing a kindred soul, Ernie makes Mike his apprentice.

John Sayles' script had obvious appeal for director Bill Forsyth (*Local Hero*, *Housekeeping*), who likes unconventional characters. The movie excels in delineating the odd father-son relationship as well as its basic conflict—Ernie, obsessed with security, doesn't want to attract attention, while Mike wants to spend his money on a big apartment, a big car, and a pretty, not-too-bright prostitute.

Siemaszko is terrific, and Forsyth loads the film with the little human quirks that make his best movies fly. But *Breaking In*'s greatest asset is Reynolds,



Criminal Mischief: Ernie (Burt Reynolds) gives Mike (Casey Siemaszko) pointers on *Breaking In*.

whether he's in action or just giving life lessons. The gleam in his eyes when he talks about a huge old safe, his personal Great White Whale, tells us that the Mike in him has never died.

The astonishing *High Hopes* centers around Cyril and Shirley, a scruffy, likable pair of London unmarrieds trying to get by. Cyril is a leftist who believes in the need for revolution but sees little chance of it happening. Shirley has a cactus named Thatcher, whose image also adorns the dartboard.



Outcasts: Philip Davis, Edna Dore and Ruth Sheen survey England's social landscape in *High Hopes*.

Lately, their hopes have taken a battering. Cyril's mom is suffering from Alzheimer's disease. A pair of infantile yuppies has gentrified the house next door. (He-yuppie: "What made this country great is a place for everyone and everyone in his place—and this is my place.") Cyril's sister, married to a crude, shady accountant, redefines the words "selfish" and "airhead."

In showing how the British class system has reshaped itself under Thatcher (not for the better), writer/director Mike Leigh makes his characters serve equally well as people and symbols. The spaces in which they live are sharply observed and funny in themselves. And when Mom locks herself out, or a free-for-all erupts at her birthday party, Leigh takes us to the limit of comic horror.

Shirley Valentine, the tale of an En-

glish housewife's personal liberation, seems tame after *High Hopes*. Shirley is resigned to the routine of married middle age until a friend wins a Greek vacation and invites her along. Friends and family are scandalized, first that she would go on holiday without her stuffy husband, and again when she stays.

Pauline Collins, who created the role of Willy Russell's play, is convincing and winning. But there may not be enough of Collins, who on stage was the only character. The film's clumsy introduction, by Lewis Gilbert (who previously adapted Russell's *Educating Rita*), loses more in spoken descriptions than it gains in pictures, and the star is made to look superior to nearly every supporting character.

The Big Picture sometimes gets lost in
continued on page 82

REVIEWED

BREAKING IN

1989. Burt Reynolds, Casey Siemaszko; wr. John Sayles; dir. Bill Forsyth. 95m. (R) Hi cc \$89.99. HBO. V image: good.

HIGH HOPES

1988. Philip Davis, Ruth Sheen; wr./dir. Mike Leigh. 110m. (NR) \$89.95. Hi Academy. V image: good.

SHIRLEY VALENTINE

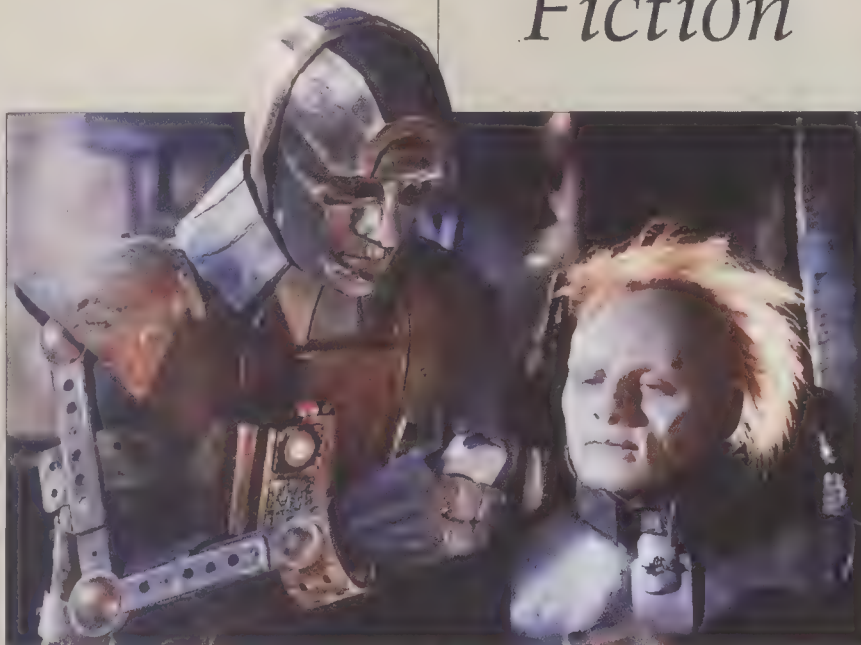
1989. Pauline Collins, Tom Conti; pr./dir. Lewis Gilbert. 108m. (R) Hi ss cc no list price. Paramount. V image: excel.

THE BIG PICTURE

1989. Kevin Bacon, Michael McKean; co-wr./dir. Christopher Guest. 100m. (PG-13) Hi cc \$89.95. LV \$34.95. RCA/Columbia. V image: fair.

BY DANIEL SCHWEIGER

Science Fiction



Out of This World: Robert Joy and Brent Carver in *Millennium* (far left), Christopher Walken in *Communion* (left) and Ed Harris and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio in *The Abyss*.



Visitors from outer and inner space are beckoning on video this month, waiting to take viewers to bizarre underwater realms, to an ecologically devastated future, through the time stream and inside a flying saucer. For the most part, these mind-blowing voyages are worth at least the price of a video rental.

Set two-and-a-half miles below the sea, *The Abyss* begins as an unfathomable force disables the U.S.S. Montana, sending the nuclear sub to the edge of a bottomless chasm. Deepcore, an undersea drilling platform commanded by "Bud" Brigman (Ed Harris), immediately comes to the rescue. Overseeing the oil workers' perilous mission is a team of Navy SEALs and a self-professed "cast-iron bitch" named Lindsay (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio) who's also Bud's reluctant wife. Using sophisticated diving equipment (and plenty of wisecracks) the Deepcore crew locates the Montana. But a hurricane wreaks havoc on Deepcore, making it only a matter of time before shattering water pressure, lack of air, and a psychotic villain send our heroes into the abyss—and reveal its fantastic mystery.

Hardware-obsessed as ever, director James Cameron has made *The Abyss* a technological marvel. Shooting his gigantic devices inside a water-filled nuclear reactor cooling tower while recording dialogue through the water, Cameron manages to dazzle without

rendering the film emotionally cold. There's a new (and welcome) human intensity to his pressure-cooker technique.

Cameron's nerve-wracked pacing surpasses that of his other films, including *Aliens* and *The Terminator*. And there's a real sense of exploring the unknown, as Deepcore eerily skims over the Montana's hull, or as Bud, fitted with a deep dive suit and breathing fluid, makes a 2001-like descent into the pit. However, it's a near-drowning that provides the film's most emotional moment. Bud and Lindsay's bitter walls

break down as the water rises, proving that love makes for the best special effects.

For all its attempted scope, *Slipstream* has little going for it other than production design. Supersonic winds, which have blown away the earth's surface, are used by a ruthless lawman (Mark Hammill) and a roguish bounty hunter (Bill Paxton) to capture a wandering android. The flying sequences, in which sleek gliders pass over verdant canyons and cave dwellings, are magical at first, but the sets and gorgeous photography lose their appeal as it becomes obvious the film will never arrive at a plot.

Slipstream is loaded with cobwebbed stock elements, among them a Han Solo-ish hero, a female villain who ultimately falls for him and a tin man who spouts half-baked Kenobi-isms while healing sick children and looking for a heart. Blame this sci-fi mess on *Star Wars* producer Gary Kurtz, who's attempted to base an epic on nothing but hot air. Only Hammill develops any momentum. He's magnetically nasty, but disappears for nearly all of the film's second half. It's just one of *Slipstream's* many wastes of talent, and the most unforgivable.

Perhaps Hammill was kidnapped by time travelers, a fate that befalls plane-crash victims in *Millennium*. While investigating the remains of a DC-10, Bill

continued on page 82

REVIEWED

THE ABYSS

1989. Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio; dir. James Cameron. 140m. (PG-13) Hi ss cc \$89.98 CBS/Fox. V image: excel.

SLIPSTREAM

1989. Mark Hammill, Bill Paxton, Kitty Aldridge; dir. Steven M. Lisberger. 92m. (PG-13) Hi ss cc \$79.95 MCEG/Virgin. V image: very good.

MILLENNIUM

1989. Kris Kristofferson, Cheryl Ladd, Daniel J. Travanti; dir. Michael Anderson. 108m. (PG-13) Hi ss cc \$89.95 IVE. V image: good.

COMMUNION

1989. Christopher Walken, Lindsay Crouse, Frances Sternhagen; dir. Philippe Mora. 103m. (R) Hi ss cc \$89.95. MCEG/Virgin. V image: very good.

Directory

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH

Carmen Jones

1954. Dorothy Dandridge, Harry Belafonte, Pearl Bailey, Roy Glenn, Diahann Carroll; lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II; dir. Otto Preminger. At last! Tied up in a rights dispute for decades, this intriguing rewrite of Bizet's opera has finally reached home video. Sorry, tape watchers: disc only. 105m. dig. let. 2 sides. \$59.98. CBS/Fox.

Cookie

1989. Peter Falk, Dianne Wiest, Emily Lloyd, Brenda Vaccaro, Jerry Lewis; dir. Susan Seidelman. Racketeer's daughter helps him foil vindictive D.A. 93m. (R) ss cc \$89.95 & \$29.98. Also Sp.-sub. version (V only). Warner.

Damn Yankees

1958. Tab Hunter, Gwen Verdon, Ray Walston, Jean Stapleton; pr./dir. George Abbott, Stanley Donen. Baseball fan strikes bargain with Satan to give his hometown team shot at winning World Series. Spirited musical choreographed by Bob Fosse. 110m. cc \$59.95. LV \$24.98. Warner.

Dead Poets Society

1989. Robin Williams, Robert Sean Leonard, Ethan Hawke, Kurtwood Smith; dir. Peter Weir. Williams plays a '50s prep school English teacher with an '80s sensibility in this affecting paean to liberal values. 124m. (PG) ss cc \$89.95. Touchstone.

Fat Man and Little Boy

1989. Paul Newman, Dwight Schultz, Bon-



Playing For Keeps: F. Murray Abraham (left) and Tom Selleck endure life behind bars in *An Innocent Man*.

nie Bedelia, Natasha Richardson, Laura Dern, John Cusack; dir. Roland Joffe. Army general supervises development of the A-bomb. A misfire, though cast works hard. 126m. (PG-13) ss \$89.95. Paramount.

Father

1966. B&W. Miklos Gabor, Daniel Erdelyi, Andras Balint; dir. Istvan Szabo. Hungarian drama about young man coming to terms with idealistic image of his father. Oscar

nominee for Best Foreign Film. 96m. sub. \$59.95. Connoisseur.

Fear Strikes Out

1957. B&W. Anthony Perkins, Karl Malden, Norma Moore, Adam Williams; dir. Robert Mulligan. Malden perfectly cast as overbearing father who pushes son (Perkins) into pro baseball career and finally into mental illness. 100m. \$14.95. Paramount.

Hell Is for Heroes

1962. Steve McQueen, Bobby Darin, Fess Parker, James Coburn, Nick Adams, Bob Newhart; dir. Don Siegel. Tough World War II actioner, a tour de force for McQueen as G.I. leader defending position against Germans. 90m. \$14.95. Paramount.

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying

1967. Robert Morse, Michele Lee, Rudy Vallee; dir. David Swift. Window-washer gets ahead with help of a handbook. Terrific musical adapted from stage hit. Disc only. 121m. let. dig. 3 sides. \$39.95. MGM/UA.

The Infinite Voyage

1989. Episodes of Public TV science series. *The Great Dinosaur Hunt*: recent excavations. *The Geometry of Life*: genetic engineering. *Unseen Worlds*: objects minute and vast. 60m. ea. V only. \$29.98 ea. Vestron.

An Innocent Man

1989. Tom Selleck, F. Murray Abraham, Laila Robins; dir. Peter Yates. Standard

See next page for key to abbreviations.

Labels For Less



What's down, doc? To celebrate Bugs Bunny's 50th birthday, **Warner** has discounted its entire stable of cartoon compilations from \$14.95 to \$12.95 per tape, including Vols. 1-3 of the *Looney Tunes Video Show*, four Spanish-dubbed *Fiesta de Comiquitas* roundups and the 12-cassette *Golden Jubilee Collection*. Each title features a crop of uncut, superbly transferred vintage shorts. And that's not all folks: feature-length collections *The Bugs Bunny/Road Runner Movie*, *The Looney Looney Looney Bugs Bunny Movie*, *Daffy Duck's Movie: Fantastic Island* and *Bugs Bunny's 1,001 Rabbit Tales* are all slashed to \$19.98, a sizeable drop from previous list prices.

Paramount salutes "Good Sports" in film history with \$14.95, standard-speed reissues of *Bang the Drum Slowly* (previously \$69.95), *The Bad News Bears*, *Downhill Racer*, *The Longest Yard*, *North Dallas Forty* and *The Cadys*. A concurrent promotion, "Tough Guys Are Back," includes *Death Wish*, *Escape from Alcatraz*, *The Warriors*, *Uncommon Valor*, *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* and *Badge 373*.

The cream of **Orion's** French-film crop now commands just \$19.98 per title: *Au Revoir Les Enfants*, *Jean de Florette* and sequel *Manon of the Spring*, and, la piece de resistance, the delectable *Babette's Feast*. —SD

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DIRECTORY

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The Judge and the Assassin

1975. Philippe Noiret, Michel Galabru, Isabelle Huppert; dir. Bertrand Tavernier. Gripping courtroom drama: Judge must decide whether accused murderer is insane. 130m. sub. \$79.95. Connoisseur.

The Legends of Rock 'n' Roll

1990. Rome concert uniting first seven Rock Hall of Fame inductees: Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard, Fats Domino, Ray Charles, James Brown, Bo Diddley, B.B. King. 55m. ss V only. \$19.99. HBO.

The More the Merrier

1943. B&W. Jean Arthur, Joel McCrea, Charles Coburn; pr./dir. George Stevens. World War II housing shortage prompts D.C. woman to take in two male boarders, one of whom she falls in love with. Delightful comedy, and don't miss sublimely sexy scene with McCrea and Arthur on front stoop. 104m. V only. \$19.95. RCA/Columbia.

One Night of Love

1934. B&W. Grace Moore, Tullio Carminati, Lyle Talbot; dir. Victor Schertzinger. Ambitious singer becomes Metropolitan diva. Musical melodrama with many opera highlights. 80m. V only. \$19.95. RCA/Columbia.

The Pajama Game

1957. Doris Day, John Raitt, Carol Haney, Eddie Foy, Jr.; pr./dir. George Abbott, Stanley Donen. Dandy musical features Day as union leader determined to negotiate salary

hike despite her affection for handsome new boss. 101m. cc B V \$59.95. LV \$24.98. Warner.

Pal Joey

1957. Frank Sinatra, Rita Hayworth, Kim Novak; dir. George Sidney. Adaptation of Broadway show about a no-good cabaret singer, sweetened into tale of wisecracking womanizer keen to open his own nightclub. Sinatra delivers smarmy dialogue, great Rodgers & Hart songs with equal aplomb. 109m. V only. \$19.95. RCA/Columbia.

Picnic

1956. William Holden, Kim Novak, Rosalind Russell, Cliff Robertson, Susan Strasberg, Verna Felton; dir. Joshua Logan. Charismatic drifter arrives in small Midwestern town. Excellent drama, though CinemaScope buffs will flinch at awkward pan-and-scanning. 113m. V only. \$19.95. RCA/Columbia.

Rendez-vous

1985. Juliette Binoche, Lambert Wilson, Jean-Louis Trintignant; dir. Andre Techine. Aspiring Parisian actress begins obsessive affair with star of live sex show. Dark French-made romance, skillfully photographed. 82m. sub. let. \$79.95. Connoisseur.

Rocco and His Brothers

1960. B&W. Alain Delon, Renato Salvatori, Claudia Cardinale; dir. Luchino Visconti. Complex, powerful family epic: Italian woman brings her four sons to Milan in hopes of a better life, instead finds dissolution and heartbreak. 144m. sub. \$79.95. Connoisseur.

Second Sight

1989. John Larroquette, Bronson Pinchot, Bess Armstrong; dir. Joel Zwick. Psychic helps detective find kidnapped cardinal. Lame. 85m. (PG) ss cc \$89.95. Also Sp.-sub. version (V only). Warner.

The Story of Louis Pasteur

1936. B&W. Paul Muni, Josephine Hutchinson, Anita Louise; dir. William Dieterle. Hollywood's first major biopic won Muni an Oscar for his impersonation of the French scientist. 85m. \$29.95. MGM/UA.

An Unremarkable Life

1989. Patricia Neal, Shelley Winters, Mako; dir. Amin Q. Chaudhri. Spinster sisters bicker when one falls in love. Dismal star vehicle, a bonanza for camp fans. 92m. (PG) \$79.95. SVS.

Yojimbo

1963. B&W. Toshiro Mifune, Eijiro Tono; dir. Akira Kurosawa. Samurai for hire works both sides of a town dispute. Released in '86, Embassy's cropped version of this wide-screen masterpiece was a travesty; new LV transfer (also shown on TNT) preserves its artful compositions and places titles below picture. Disc only. 112m. sub. let. dig. \$49.95. Criterion.

COMEDY

Chris Elliott: FDR, A One-Man Show/ Action Family

1990. Dir. Matt Wickline/Gary Weiss. Chris Elliott, Marv Albert, Bob Elliott. Parodies

PROGRAM LEGEND

DATE

Varies according to type of program.

Films: original

theatrical release.

Made-for-broadcast:

first telecast.

Made-for-video:

first release in any format.

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production of collected work.

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IMAGE RATING

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The Incredible Mr. Limpet

1964. Live action/anim. Don Knotts, Carole Cook, Andrew Duggan, Jack Weston; dir. Arthur Lubin. Colorful musical fantasy for juveniles: Henpecked husband becomes a dolphin. 99m. \$59.95. Also Sp.-dub. version, V only. Warner.

Paul Rodriguez Live: I Need the Couch

1990. Pr./dir. Tom Moody. Stand-up routine taped live in New Mexico. 60m. ss cc V

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1989. Michael Douglas, Andy Garcia, Ken Takakura, Kate Capshaw; dir. Ridley Scott. Two New York cops escort Japanese assassin to Tokyo, where he promptly escapes. 125m. (R) ss cc B \$29.95 V no retail price. Paramount.

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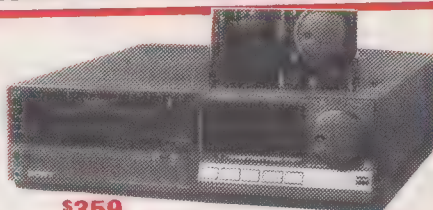
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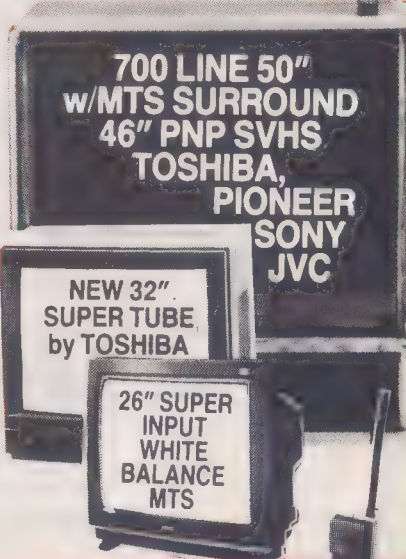
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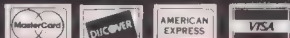


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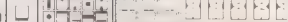
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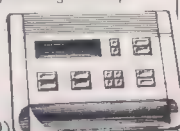
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1954. B&W. Judy Holliday, Jack Lemmon. Comedy. 81m. dig. \$39.95. Image.

Kiss Tomorrow Goodbye

1950. B&W. James Cagney, Barbara Payton. Action. Includes trailer. 102m. dig. \$29.98. Republic.

Les Comperes

1985. Gerard Depardieu, Pierre Richard. French comedy. 109m. sub. dig. \$49.95. Image.

Patty Hearst

1988. Natasha Richardson; dir. Paul Schrader. Drama. 108m. (R) dig. \$39.95. Image.

Silverado

1985. Kevin Kline, Kevin Costner. Western. CLV format with supplementary material in CAV. 132m. (PG) \$69.95. Criterion.

Sullivan's Travels

1941. B&W. Joel McCrea, Veronica Lake; wr./dir. Preston Sturges. Comedy. 90m. \$34.98. MCA.

Taxi Driver

1976. Robert De Niro, Cybill Shepherd. Drama. Commentary by Martin Scorsese on analog 2AP. 113m. (R) CAV 4 sides dig. \$99.95. Also CLV version (no 2AP) \$49.95. Criterion.

DRAMA

continued from page 70

Brian DePalma's mind these days. Having gone respectable with *The Untouchables*, he plunges headlong into the grisly world of Vietnam War atrocities for *Casualties of War*. Based on an actual incident, this grim saga recounts the kidnapping, rape and murder of a young Vietnamese girl by American soldiers.

Anyone who still remembers DePalma for *Carrie* or *Body Double* will be amazed at the director's restraint. For all the inherent violence of the story, he details the events without excessive fanfare, keeping such trademarks as romantic music and camera gimmickry to a minimum. Instead, DePalma trusts his cast—and therein lies the problem. Bless his soul for stretching, Michael J. Fox tries hard as the decent soldier outraged by his buddies' actions, but he seems too lightweight for the task. Sean Penn, meanwhile, gives 110 percent, absurdly overplaying the part of the ring-leader sergeant like a comedian spoofing young Marlon Brando. Although *Casualties of War* handles its sad subject with startling sensitivity, in the end it's

strangely uninvolved.

The hilariously dreadful *Heart of Dixie* illustrates just how much worse things can get. Set at an all-white Southern university in the late '50s, it follows the growth of the civil-rights movement through the eyes of an idealistic coed, whose evolving values lead to conflict with the establishment. The bland dialogue and predictable plot wouldn't have mattered so much if Ally Sheedy were less wooden. Sidekicks Virginia Madsen (the trumpy but good-hearted sorority sister) and Phoebe Cates (the campus beatnik, dressed in black), not to mention Treat Williams (the progressive liberal reporter), can share the blame. There's plenty to go around.

INDIANA JONES

continued from page 70

after comparing the two tapes I've been forced to revise my assessment of S-VHS—upward.

You know the story: Indiana Jones (Harrison Ford), archaeologist/superman, is hot on the trail of the Grail. But

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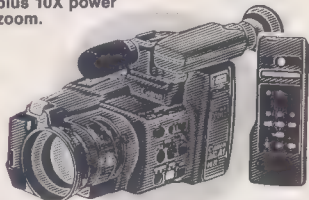
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Before the shattering final frames unreel, many questions are answered: How did Indie get his Stetson? How many Germans can Indie blow away in one movie? What's the right way to ask Hitler for an autograph? Can a blonde Nazi (Alison Doody) tempt the guys from their quest? And finally, what do you say to a gal who, in the midst of a lip-sucking clinch, says things like "Zets how Austrians say goodbye?"

I pondered all this while watching the tapes on a Zenith VRE550HF S-VHS VCR connected to the Y/C input of a 25-inch Sony PVM-2530 XBR Pro, with audio going through a Pioneer VSX-9500S audio/video receiver that includes five-channel Dolby Pro Logic surround sound. This is just the kind of mercilessly accurate equipment the programming industry dreads.

I wasn't surprised that the color looked similar in both versions, or that the S-VHS tape appeared much sharper, despite the reduction in height (and resolution) inherent in letterboxing. What startled me was the S-VHS tape's relative lack of noise. On the whole, Indie's *Last Crusade* looks more impressive than the demonstration tapes hardware manufacturers use to showcase their S-VHS VCRs.

The tape opens with a Diet Coke commercial. It might be a parody of the movie, but I'm not sure, because I did what all good Americans do in this situation: I went to the kitchen. When I got back, an onscreen notice was informing my empty chair about letterboxing.

Despite his reported aversion to panned-and-scanned video releases, Spielberg hedges his bets when composing wide-screen images, rarely straying outside the sweet spot in the screen's center for more than a second. The surround soundtrack is heavily and often deafeningly used.

Last Crusade is in every sense a technological phenomenon in the tradition of Connery's *Bond* and Lucas' *Star Wars*. It's quality entertainment more than great art. But on these terms, it succeeds handsomely. —Mark Fleischmann

COMEDY

continued from page 71

itself, though it is often very funny. Kevin Bacon plays Nick Chapman, a gifted film student who gets a chance to make a Hollywood movie. Film school, how-

ever, didn't teach him how to deal with would-be actresses, two-faced agents, market research and egotistical studio executives. After a while there isn't much left of Nick's arty original concept, or of Nick.

Christopher Guest's directorial debut is very good as long as it sticks to its main issue—how the system mitigates against original movies. Guest has a good eye and ear for the pretensions of the industry's fakes and flakes, throws in some wicked parodies of bad student filmmaking and Hollywood interior decoration, and uses enough "in" jokes to fill a film encyclopedia.

To enjoy them you have to get past the story of Nick's personal fall and redemption, which belongs in another movie, and his fantasies, which don't belong in any movie. (If our review copy is any indication, you may also have to cope with a grainy transfer.)

Guest, who quotes Frank Capra both verbally and visually, may have let himself fall victim to the process he describes. Still, it's hard not to like a movie where a director is informed that he can't make a movie in black & white because "the projectors are all in color." ■

SCIENCE FICTION

continued from page 72

Smith (Kris Kristofferson) finds a bizarre in-flight recording and a strange metal device. With the convoluted logic typical of time-travel movies, it's revealed that the gadget is from 1,000 years in the future, where an industrial wasteland's overlords refresh their workforce by replacing disaster-bound passengers with ready-made corpses. It's up to woman warrior Louise Baltimore (Cheryl Ladd) to get the device back by romancing Bill, who oddly knows her from before.

Millennium's effects may look a little cheap, and its acting may be way over the top, but there's something zanily romantic about a crash investigator who would destroy the future for love. *Millennium* rises to the exclusive B-movie plateau of goofy high-mindedness and unintentional humor.

The relatively level-headed *Communism* makes a trip aboard an alien spacecraft seem chillingly plausible. Author Whitley Streiber (Christopher Walken) has nightmares in which he's kidnapped and tortured by little blue men. Hypnosis gives the events horrific clarity, as Anne (Lindsay Crouse) impotently watches her husband ushered into a church-like UFO, given a cosmic enema and revealed as a lifelong pawn of the extraterrestrials.

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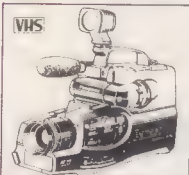
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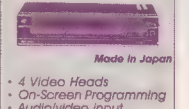
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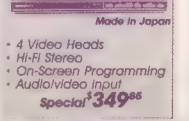
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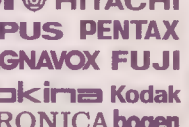


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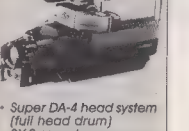
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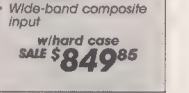
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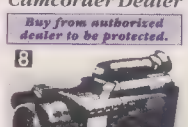


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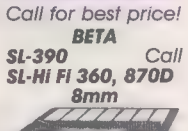
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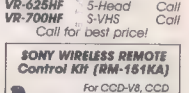
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make you believe Streiber's experiences are real, *Communion* presents its surreal events as one man's attempt to find his place in the universe. *Communion* is a close encounter of the most terrifying kind, but this fear gradually turns into self-discovery as Whitley asks if the aliens might be gods who hold the keys to our afterlife. *Communion* ultimately overcomes skepticism with its hallucinogenic mixture of strong acting, smart dialogue and a true sense of wonder. ■

HITACHI

continued from page 21

bright well past 45 degrees to each side. The visible picture noise pulls an otherwise excellent picture down to very good.

Audio frequency response from the input jacks to the front speakers is 20 Hertz to 20 kilohertz, +0.1/-1.8 dB. The front speakers deliver a range of 50 Hz to 16 kHz with traces above and below that range. Audio S/N is 68.4 dB with a total harmonic distortion of 1.8 percent.

For best surround effect the input

balance control must be correctly adjusted, but the effect is quite realistic. The hall and matrix modes approximate concert hall and stadium ambience and are best suited for non-Dolby stereo movies. Audio performance is very good with the built-in speakers and, with external hi-fi and surround speakers, can go all the way to excellent.

Conclusion. The Hitachi CU4600B has a bright, colorful picture that is pleasing but a bit noisy, and very good sound. It is very easy to use, but the menu adjustment system can grate on your nerves if you make frequent adjustments. Its overall performance is very good. It is a bit pricey at \$3,000, but well worth consideration if you seek a bright 46-inch picture. ■

SHARP PROJECTOR

continued from page 15

Performance. Because the organization of the pixels the LCD panels project is staggered and the pixels are small, there is no screen-door effect superimposed on the picture. Since each pixel is a single color, certain small details that

appear fuzzy or smeared on tube-type displays disappear completely if they are tiny. If they are large, they influence the entire color of the pixel.

Pixel size restricts the picture's detail. Horizontal resolution is about 280 to 290 lines. We are aware of no way to measure signal-to-noise ratios directly from the terminals of an LCD, so our ratings are based on comparisons with tube sets. The video signal-to-noise ratio is approximately 53 decibels, while the chroma AM and PM S/N ratios are each about 62 dB.

This is only the second LCD projector in general release, and it is much better than Kodak's discontinued LC500. We rate the Sharp projector excellent in terms of the present state of LCD projection.

Conclusion. The Sharp XV-100 is not as good as the bigger, heavier tube-type projectors, but it is especially attractive because of its small size, light weight and flexible operation. It has an excellent overall rating and outperforms the only other LCD projector ever marketed. The suggested price is \$5,299, which includes the screen. We recommend it highly when both a large image and portability are important. ■

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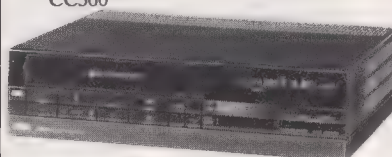
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181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195

Allow 6-8 weeks for information to arrive. Card expires July 19, 1990. V/5/90

WARRANTY & FACTORY SEALED BOXES

make you believe Streiber's experiences are real, *Communion* presents its surreal events as one man's attempt to find his place in the universe. *Communion* is a close encounter of the most terrifying kind, but this fear gradually turns into self-discovery as Whitley asks if the aliens might be gods who hold the keys to our afterlife. *Communion* ultimately overcomes skepticism with its hallucinogenic mixture of strong acting, smart dialogue and a true sense of wonder. ■

HITACHI

continued from page 21

bright well past 45 degrees to each side. The visible picture noise pulls an otherwise excellent picture down to very good.

Audio frequency response from the input jacks to the front speakers is 20 Hertz to 20 kilohertz, +0.1/-1.8 dB. The front speakers deliver a range of 50 Hz to 16 kHz with traces above and below that range. Audio S/N is 68.4 dB with a total harmonic distortion of 1.8 percent.

balance control must be correctly adjusted, but the effect is quite realistic. The hall and matrix modes approximate concert hall and stadium ambience and are best suited for non-Dolby stereo movies. Audio performance is very good with the built-in speakers and, with external hi-fi and surround speakers, can go all the way to excellent.

Conclusion. The Hitachi CU4600B has a bright, colorful picture that is pleasing but a bit noisy, and very good sound. It is very easy to use, but the menu adjustment system can grate on your nerves if you make frequent adjustments. Its overall performance is very good. It is a bit pricey at \$3,000, but well worth consideration if you seek a bright 46-inch picture. ■

SHARP PROJECTOR

continued from page 15

Performance. Because the organization of the pixels the LCD panels project is staggered and the pixels are small, there is no screen-door effect superimposed on the picture. Since each pixel is

appear fuzzy or smeared on tube-type displays disappear completely if they are tiny. If they are large, they influence the entire color of the pixel.

Pixel size restricts the picture's detail. Horizontal resolution is about 280 to 290 lines. We are aware of no way to measure signal-to-noise ratios directly from the terminals of an LCD, so our ratings are based on comparisons with tube sets. The video signal-to-noise ratio is approximately 53 decibels, while the chroma AM and PM S/N ratios are each about 62 dB.

This is only the second LCD projector in general release, and it is much better than Kodak's discontinued LC500. We rate the Sharp projector excellent in terms of the present state of LCD projection.

Conclusion. The Sharp XV-100 is not as good as the bigger, heavier tube-type projectors, but it is especially attractive because of its small size, light weight and flexible operation. It has an excellent overall rating and outperforms the only other LCD projector ever marketed. The suggested price is \$5,299, which includes the screen. We recommend it highly when both a large image

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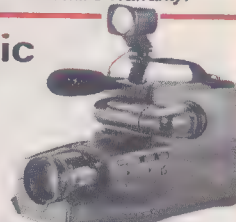
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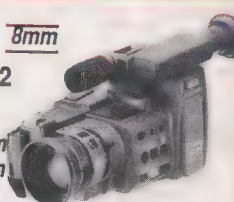
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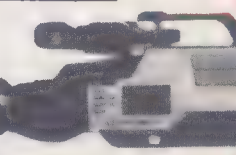
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inches (h/w/d)

Power Requirements:
9.6 VDC

Power Consumption:
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nominal

Image Sensor:
1/2-inch CCD

Lens:
f/1.6, 6x (9-54 mm)
power zoom to macro
plus telemacro mode

Filter Diameter:
46mm

**Minimum Focusing
Distance:**
to surface of lens in
normal macro, to 2 feet
in telemacro

Autofocus:
TTL phase detection
type, switchable to
powered manual focus

Minimum Illumination:
rated—10 lux; mea-
sured—12.6 lux for 50
IRE units

Sensitivity: single range
10-100,000 lux

Auto Fade:
to white—hold-down

Shutter Speeds:
1/1000 and 1/60 sec.

Interval Timer:
1.5 seconds every 10,
30 or 60 seconds

Viewfinder:
0.7-inch CRT with on-
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Horizontal Resolution:
240 lines

**Luminance S/N,
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39.4 dB, SP; 40.1 dB,
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**Luminance S/N,
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48.2 dB, SP; 48.4 dB,
EP

Chroma AM S/N:
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EP

Chroma PM S/N:
37.6 dB, SP; 27.4 dB,
EP

**Audio Frequency
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Audio S/N: 42.2 dB

Audio Distortion:
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VIDEOTESTS

MINOLTA CAMCORDER

continued from page 15

and set, counter on/off, reset, memory, an interval timer and a self-timer, plus slide switches for edit mode and SP/EP.

The viewfinder is hinged on a short arm, which in turn is hinged to the top of the body, so it can lock in a forward or rearward position with the viewing hood extended two inches past the rear panel. It can also be left in any tilted position.

The battery slides into slots on the right side and becomes part of the handgrip, with the front loop of the strap serving as a lock for the battery. At the

rear of the handgrip is a bulge with jacks for a wired remote, an earphone and audio/video out. The underside of the bulge has a tracking control.

In front of the handgrip are jacks for an external mic and DC in. There is no autofocus window, since the focusing mechanism gets its information from the image sensor by phase detection.

Operation. Because white balance, iris and autofocus switch to locked positions instead of manual modes, the Series-C 50 behaves a bit differently from most camcorders. Auto exposure lock prevents the iris from changing until the locking feature is switched off. White balance lock is similar—a user must

have a correctly color-balanced scene on which to lock it. This is very important when the camcorder experiences different lighting conditions than the subject, as in shooting an indoor scene through a window.

The zoom rocker becomes a powered focus adjustment when the AF is switched off. Since the zoom no longer functions, the user must make an approximate zoom setting before switching off the autofocus. Auto fade is to white rather than the more common black.

The date and time stamp works much like an electronic watch, using buttons on the top panel. The date/time button on the left side determines

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Two unusual controls are an interval timer and a self-timer. Interval allows automatic 1.5-second recording bursts at intervals of ten, 30 or 60 seconds. The self-timer starts recording ten seconds after a user presses the button, recording either a 15-second burst or continuously. Another rare feature, continuous focus down to the surface of the lens, makes it easy to transfer slides to tape with the optional slide holder, and to take close-ups of small objects.

The camcorder's audio and video dub and flying erase head let a user change the audio or video portions of a recording. We missed any provision for audio/video input, but were pleased with the sync dub feature, which lets a user release pause on a dubbing recorder with the pause button on the camcorder.

A wide range of optional accessories makes shooting in a variety of situations easy. Conveniences like the rain jacket are unusual. One set of accessory lenses lets a user extend tele- and wide-angle ranges by 1.5x and 0.65x, respectively. Another set extends the tele range by 2x and the wide-angle range by 0.5x.

The unusual locks on the auto mechanism, instead of conventional manual options, are a bit restrictive, but simple to use. Overall ease of operation is good to very good.

Performance. The Series C-51 delivers horizontal resolution of 240 lines with an unweighted video signal-to-noise ratio of 39.4 decibels at SP and 40.1 dB at EP. It delivers a weighted video S/N of 48.2 dB at SP and 48.4 dB at EP. The chroma AM S/N is 44.1 dB at SP and 31.6 dB at EP, while the chroma PM S/N is 37.6 dB at SP and 27.4 dB at EP. These results are unusual because the video S/N is better at EP than at SP. Picture quality is good compared to other VHS-C camcorders.

Audio quality is good for a VHS mono linear track machine. It has a -3 dB frequency response of 100 Hertz to 10 kilohertz at SP and 100 Hz to 4 kHz at EP. The audio S/N is 42.2 dB and the total harmonic distortion is 1.5 percent.

Conclusion. Additional features make the Series-C 51 camcorder more desirable than the Series-C 50 it replaces. However, it is not Super VHS, the auto lock features can be limiting and a number of the fancier features high-priced camcorders possess are omitted. Its varied optional accessories are a big plus. At a suggested price of \$1,220 it is less expensive than many other camcorders. Price plus an overall rating of good to very good make it a good value. If a VHS-C camcorder is your choice, this is worth considering. ■

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tendo machine to channel 3 output) and place the deck into record mode.

Mirror magic

A simplified wipe effect can be achieved with a mirror. Place the mirror at a 45-degree angle in front of the camcorder and far enough away to get a good focus. After taping the subject reflected in the mirror, slowly pull the mirror back to reveal a second subject behind the mirror.

Paul A. Thomas
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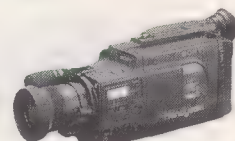


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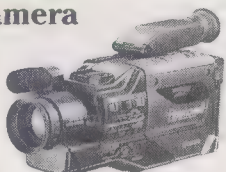
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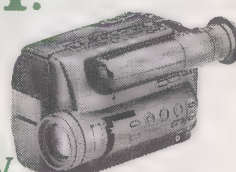
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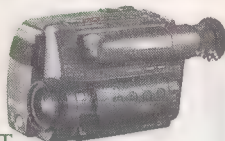
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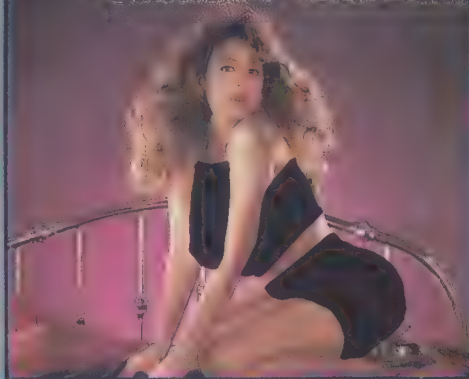
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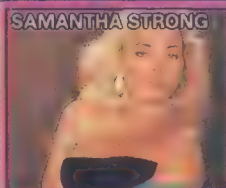
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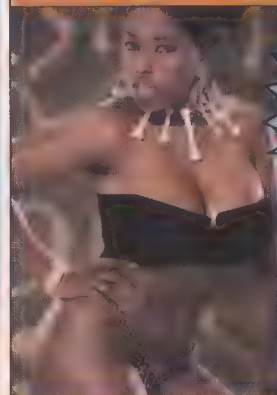
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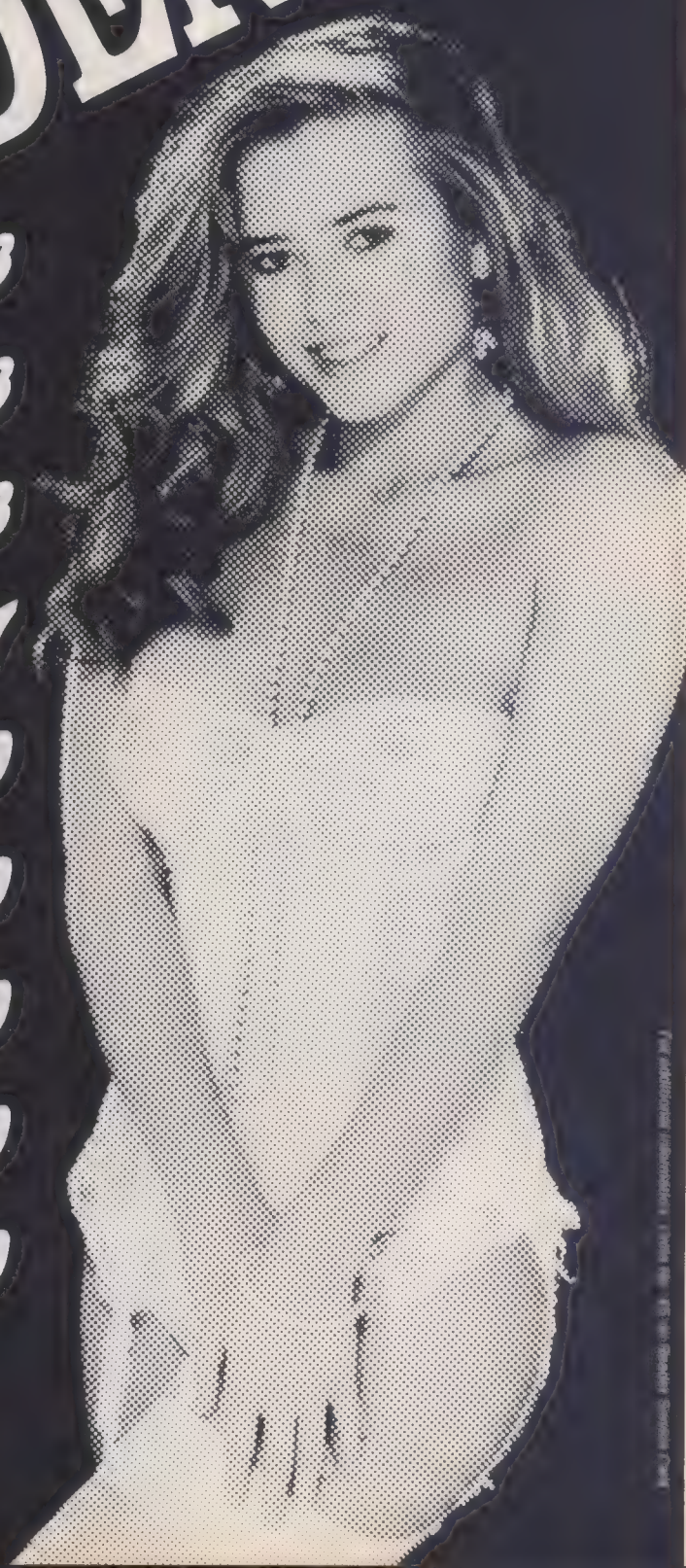
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GROUP JERK	GROUP GROPE
[REDACTED] ON MY FACE	[REDACTED] PLUGGERS
SHOOT IT ALL	MAKE ME [REDACTED]
STROKE JOB	THIS LOADS FOR YOU
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TAKE IT ALL	GANG JERK OFF
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[REDACTED] SUCKER	BOTTOMS UP
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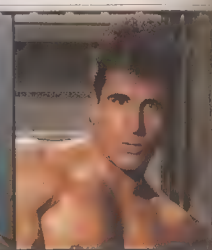
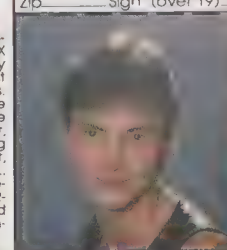
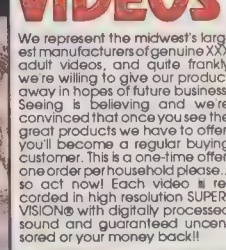
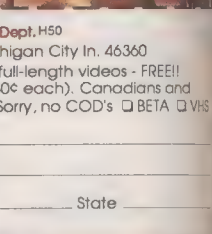
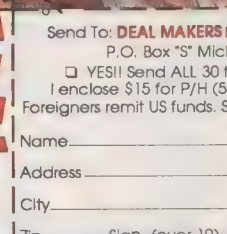
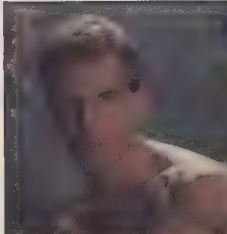
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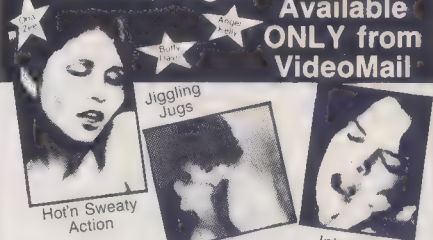
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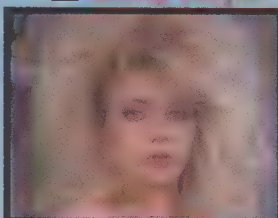
☐ Candy Larkin



☐ Janette L.



☐ Franki Lee



☐ Samantha Strong

Above are the top Videostars in adult movies however due to space limitations you only list the other 91 stars by name.

☐ Della Moore
☐ Seka
☐ Kay Parker
☐ John Holmes
☐ Tiffany Clark
☐ Linda Shaw
☐ Lois Ayres
☐ Cara Lott
☐ Kim Carson
☐ Laurie Smith
☐ Tish Ambrose
☐ Kelly Richards
☐ Buffy Davis
☐ Codi Nicole
☐ Rachel Ashley
☐ Cheri St. Clair
☐ Heather Wayne
☐ Constance Money
☐ Jacqueline L.

☐ Tamara Longley
☐ Sharon Mitchell
☐ Sahara
☐ Linda Wong
☐ Purple Passion
☐ Vera Butler
☐ Jeanie Pepper
☐ Jo Tami
☐ Johnny Keyes
☐ F.M. Bradley
☐ Ray Victor
☐ Tiffany Lane
☐ Nina DePouca
☐ Marilyn Palmer
☐ Lady Stephanie
☐ Rita Erotica
☐ Kristara Barrington
☐ Mauvais Deloitte

☐ Amber Lynn
☐ Tajia Rae
☐ Elle Rio
☐ Erica Boyer
☐ Trinity Loren
☐ Tanya Fox
☐ Lori Lovell
☐ Pam Nimo
☐ Patti Petite
☐ Desiree Lane
☐ Summer Rose
☐ Nancy Suiter
☐ Sharon Kane
☐ Joanna Storm
☐ Penny Morgan
☐ Candy Evans
☐ Brittany Stryker
☐ Janey Robbins

☐ Nina Hartley
☐ Ginger Lynn
☐ Nikki Dee
☐ Paula Harlow
☐ Lucy Luv
☐ Bunny Bleu
☐ Raven
☐ Mindie Rae
☐ Aphrodite
☐ Allison Ferrari
☐ Gina Carrera
☐ Susan Hart
☐ Crystal Breeze
☐ Athena Star
☐ Gail Force
☐ Nikki Cham
☐ Lisa Melendez
☐ Karen Summers

☐ Barbara Dare
☐ Krista Lane
☐ Nicole West
☐ Josehina C.
☐ Rayanne
☐ Lucy Logan
☐ Donna Ann
☐ Briana Starr
☐ Sheena Home
☐ Angel Kelly
☐ Chanel Price
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Up For Grabs | <input type="checkbox"/> Suck Sessions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Undressed For Sex | <input type="checkbox"/> Insatiable Ladies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Any Way I Can | <input type="checkbox"/> Nuts To Sluts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bi-Ways | <input type="checkbox"/> Swingtime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Switch Hitters | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot to Twat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passion Plays | <input type="checkbox"/> Both Sides Now |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pleasure Seekers | <input type="checkbox"/> Bi-Sexual Lust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Endless Orgies | <input type="checkbox"/> Two Into One |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3-Way | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexcitable Boy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AC / DC | <input type="checkbox"/> Really Screwed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lust A Swinging | <input type="checkbox"/> Screwing Around |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cumming Of Age | <input type="checkbox"/> Bi-Butt Slamming |
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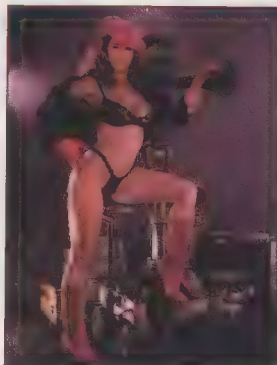
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- ☐ The Pin Up Girls: Internationally famous models from popular men's magazines in explicit action 20 min.

Oriental Orgasms: Far east lovelies show their ancient art of love making 20 min.

Superstar Search: Five superstars battle for top honors stars Barbara Dare, Nina Hartley and more 20 min.

Endless Orgies: A no holes barred sexathon 20 min.

Ebony Ecstasy: Once you go black you never go back 20 min.

Bodacious Bosoms: Christy Canyon and a bevy of big busted girls 20 min.

The Story Of A: One couple's exploration of forbidden sexuality 20 min.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Slam Dunks | <input type="checkbox"/> Ebony Humps | <input type="checkbox"/> Beverly Glenn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apollo Lust | <input type="checkbox"/> Salt & Pepper | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Cool |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Pepper | <input type="checkbox"/> Johnny Cool | <input type="checkbox"/> Ebony & Ivory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rare Treat | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Beauty | <input type="checkbox"/> Hot Black Lips |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angel Eyes | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Balled | <input type="checkbox"/> All Night Long |
| <input type="checkbox"/> So Fine | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow Dancing | <input type="checkbox"/> Nina DePonca |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nasty Blacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Hung & Horny | <input type="checkbox"/> Pleasure's Finest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> King | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Shots | <input type="checkbox"/> Jeannie Pepper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primal Urges | <input type="checkbox"/> Open Invitation | <input type="checkbox"/> Milk Chocolate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shafted | <input type="checkbox"/> Getting Down | <input type="checkbox"/> Prince Of Harlem |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tony El-Lay | <input type="checkbox"/> Harlem Honey | <input type="checkbox"/> Little Bit Of Soul |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soul | <input type="checkbox"/> The Big Bulge | <input type="checkbox"/> Cocoa & Cream |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ghetto Lust | <input type="checkbox"/> Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Blow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bare Soul | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Stockings | <input type="checkbox"/> On The Darkside |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soul Trains | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Startlets | <input type="checkbox"/> Best Of Billy Dee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oreo Girls | <input type="checkbox"/> Marilyn Palmer | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Job |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afro Animal | <input type="checkbox"/> Ebony Erotica | <input type="checkbox"/> Ebony |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black Studs | <input type="checkbox"/> Mocha Creme | <input type="checkbox"/> Brown Sugar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> F.M. Bradley | <input type="checkbox"/> After Midnight | <input type="checkbox"/> Imperial Sugar |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dark Taboo | <input type="checkbox"/> Back To Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Stormy Weather |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zebra Crew | <input type="checkbox"/> On The Make | <input type="checkbox"/> Make A Wish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dark Meat | <input type="checkbox"/> Mauvis DeNoire | <input type="checkbox"/> Black On Black |
| <input type="checkbox"/> After Dark | <input type="checkbox"/> Ebony | <input type="checkbox"/> Got The Fever |
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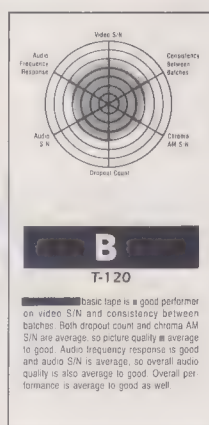
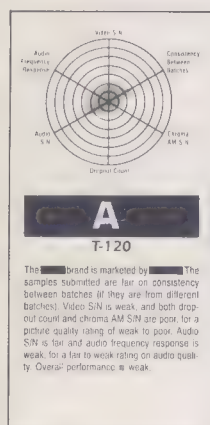
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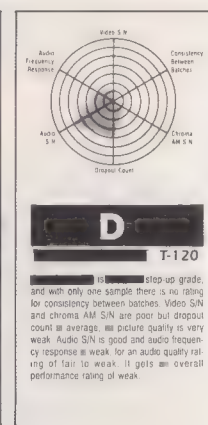
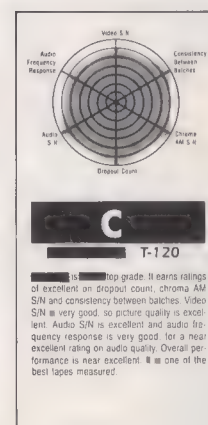
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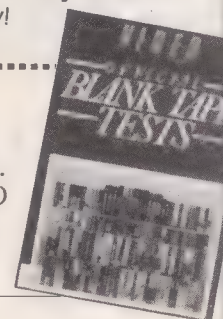
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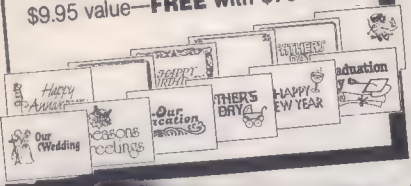
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DON'T LEAVE HOME

continued from page 54

questions are no. A hard case is great if you plan to check it with your luggage, but the camcorder won't be accessible.

On the other hand, a lot of soft cases can answer all your basic needs. The Sima CamPocket is a good example. The version for VHS camcorders is priced at \$47.95, while the CamPocket for 8mm and Compact VHS units is \$10 less. It's also water resistant and comes with a draw-string closure.

Tenba cases, from American Traveler, also do the job. Tenba's line of cases, priced from \$39 to \$109, is suitable for camcorders as small as Sony's

TECH TIPS

Tripods with a twist

When shooting with a tripod on uneven ground, adjust the tripod legs to three different lengths, the longest one a few inches longer than the shortest. As you move from spot to spot, simply lift and turn the tripod to level out the camera. This is much faster than constantly adjusting the tripod legs. Jerry De Pinto
Kent, Wash.

Handy handles

You can hold a camcorder steadier by attaching it to a simple L-shaped handle, available in most camera stores. The handle has a screw that fits the tripod mounting hole in the camcorder. The other end of the screw also has a mounting hole, so that the handle need not be removed to mount the camera on a tripod.

C.H. Ensor
Valley Center, Calif.

Do-it-yourself dissolves

If your camcorder is not equipped with the latest digital image mixing functions, you can still simulate a dissolve using this technique: When shooting, be sure to fade out of the first shot and fade in on the shot you want to dissolve to. During editing, make the edit points only about halfway through both fades. The result is as close to a dissolve as a camcorder can produce with only a fade function.

Carlo F. LoVecchio
Tioga Center, N.Y.

TR5 to full-size VHS models. The company claims its closed-cell padding offers better protection than hard cases. American Traveler (5505 36th St., Grand Rapids, MI 49512; 800-447-7770) only sells by mail order.

A nifty case for water-bound vacationers is Sima's SportsPouch. The company claims it is completely waterproof as well as inflatable. You put all your gear inside, seal the opening and inflate it. If it falls overboard, it floats. The small SportsPouch, priced at \$19.95, will support ten pounds. A larger size, priced at \$24.95, will float 20 pounds.

Everything that goes into the case is divided into three categories: recording stuff, playback stuff and things you can only use when you have a TV or electricity. Rule number one in assembling a survival kit is to carry only what you need. This lightens the load, which is important since even an 8mm camcorder will feel like it weighs about eight times more than it does at the end of a day of touring.

Pack the case so that you can easily remove all the things that you need just for playback or to charge the batteries. Keep these nonessential shooting accessories in a soft bag like those made for 35mm camera lenses. When you're ready to go out and shoot, lift the bag out of the case and leave it behind.

The necessities you'll need include one or more blank videotapes, one or two extra batteries, the battery charger, a voltage converter compatible with the places you'll be visiting, a lens brush and lens cleaning tissues. Also pack A/V cables and an RF converter so you can watch daily rushes on a local TV set.

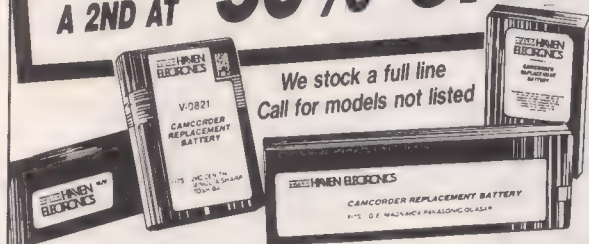
A few key audio and lens accessories are worth considering, as is a tripod. Whether or not they're necessary, depends on your shooting plans. For instance, you'll want to carry an auxiliary zoom microphone if the audio you record is going to be part of the final video. Ambico's V-0624, for \$79.95, is a good example of this type of mic. It can be switched from a wide setting to capture all the sounds in a location to a "tele" setting to focus on a single voice. Ambico's V-0630 mic includes a unique zoom switch that lets you adjust audio reception as if it were a zoom lens. Its suggested price is \$99.95.

If audio is critical, consider a wireless mic. Most are the lavalier type, like those often worn by TV news anchors. Lavalier mics have a small transmitter the on-camera person can hide in his or her clothing. A receiver connects to the auxiliary mic input on the camcorder. Wireless mics are made by several companies including Azden, Ambico, Sima, RCA and Nady. They range in price

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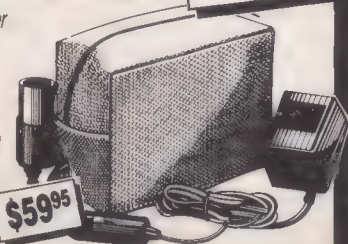
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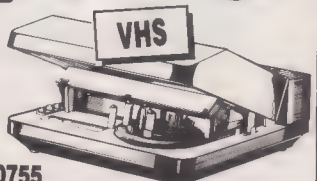
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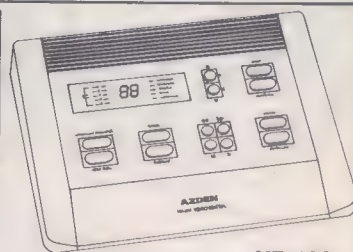
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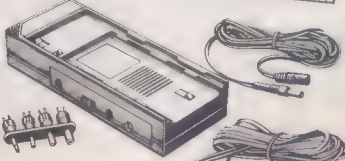
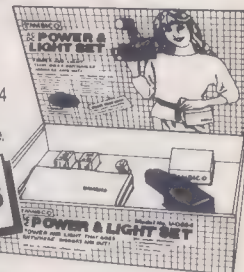
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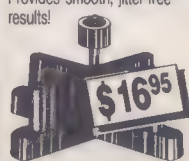
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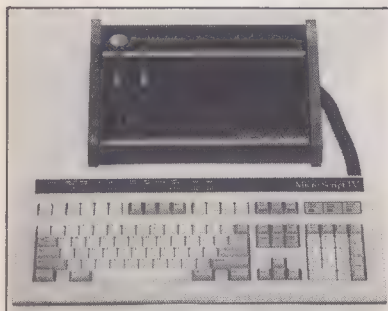


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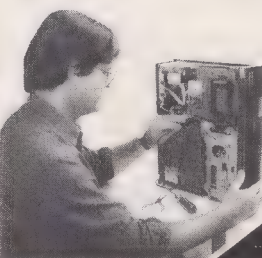
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from Radio Shack's WM002 at \$70 to Nady's 101VHF for \$279. They are light and flexible enough to extend your audio prowess, but their big disadvantage is that their transmissions can sometimes be affected by nearby radio signals.

Wide-angle and telephoto accessory lenses are useful if you can't get the camcorder to the spot you need to get the shot you want, and your unit has a threaded lens. For example, you'll need a wide-angle lens when you're backed against a wall that goes a long way in each direction. One ultra-compact accessory lens is Lenmar's VQ205, which packs wide-angle and telephoto elements in the same rim. A user simply flips the elements around to alter the focal length. Ambico's V-0365 Auto-Flip also does the job.

While you're focused on lenses, think about filters. You don't really need special effect types, but you may want to carry neutral density (ND) and polarizing filters. ND filters can usefully cut down the light in such settings as sunsplashed beaches and snowfields. However, camcorders with high-speed shutter settings can do the same thing.

You can probably do without a video light on a trip, especially if weight's a concern. If you do take one along, choose from the newer cordless models that have self-contained batteries, like Ambico's 20-watt V-0885 Travelite and RCA's VDC 200 video light.

But any light is a frill compared to the one essential you may be tempted to, but should not, leave behind—a tripod. We consider a tripod, preferably with a fluid head, to be a shooting necessity. By mounting the camera on one, you will be able to make all those smooth-looking camera moves we associate with skilled shooting. If a tripod is simply too much to bear, consider a monopod. It's lighter and easier to pack.

Light tripods and monopods are available from numerous manufacturers, including RCA, Sima, Ambico and Vivitar. Coastar makes a tripod line called Red Accents, with models ranging from \$69.95 to \$130. Cullman has an unusual tripod called Magic II. Its legs fold into a flat, compact package, and its center column converts into a monopod. The Magic II is priced at \$219.

Your final survival accessory should be a piece of paper with the serial numbers of all your camcorder or video components. If you're leaving the country, register the numbers with a U.S. Customs agent before departing. This way you won't have to go through the hassle of proving you bought the equipment in the U.S. as you return, tanned, tired, laden with bags and anxious to screen the best video you ever shot.

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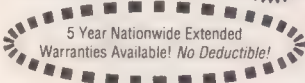
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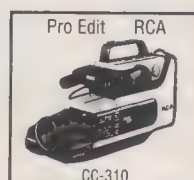
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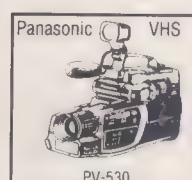
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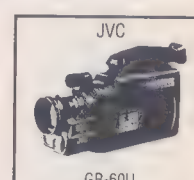
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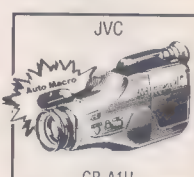
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DESIGNS

continued from page 60

moving functions from the remote—the number of necessary onscreen steps is increased, making remote operation more time-consuming. "It's true that as you put more information onscreen, you force the user to deal with menus, and that can slow down the process," says Bocko of Philips. "Still, it seems to be a better solution than overcrowded remotes."

Meanwhile, remotes that do have a large number of buttons can still be designed smartly, says Mitsubishi's Delaney. "The keys most frequently used need to be differentiated. For example, the volume up/down should be large, so if you're using it in a low-light situation, you'll know it just by the position and feel of the button."

While ergonomic fine points involving shapes of buttons may seem trivial, they're getting more and more attention. Designers are concentrating on the "feel" of equipment, particularly with hand-held products such as camcorders.

"Camcorders is the area where you really notice the movement to soft design," says Bill Plumb. "The camcorder is becoming more and more tactile."

Meanwhile, RCA designers are experimenting with a "flat-cam" approach, in which the camcorder has been reshaped to lie flat on the user's shoulder. "We've basically turned the camcorder on its side," says RCA's Lenzi of the design, which may be introduced in the near future. "It isn't really smaller, but it creates the illusion and feeling of being less bulky, and it doesn't block your vision on one side the way an upright camcorder does."

RACING TO REDUCE

The issue of compactness is still paramount, though designers have begun to realize that small isn't always beautiful; "There's still a race to reduce size, but we now know there's also a trade-off between smaller size and stability," says Tom Hitzges, Panasonic's camcorder marketing manager. One thing there's no question about: "There are still too many knobs on camcorders," says Sony's Amanuma. "They must be simplified."

Bringing simplification to a field that

is growing ever more complex can be a problem. According to designer Rene Weiss, recently named vice president in charge of design at Proton, designers are constantly trying to gauge which way the technological winds are blowing. "As we design the next generation of monitors, we don't know whether we'll be working with a picture tube with three-dimensional curves or a flat plate that's half an inch thick—naturally, this determines what you do with the design," Weiss says.

Then, too, there's the occasional intrusion of the business world. "Too often products are conceptualized for dealers rather than consumers," Weiss says. "The dealer cares about a design that helps the TV move off the shelf. A good designer, on the other hand, tends to think about what will happen once the TV is brought home—how it will look there, whether it will be easy to operate. It's up to designers to convince manufacturers to think more about what will happen after the television set is sold."

In the new age of video design, the artists will have a greater opportunity than ever before to state their case—and to state it boldly.

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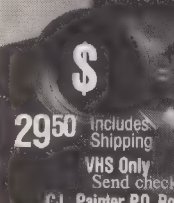
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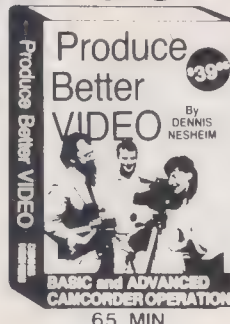
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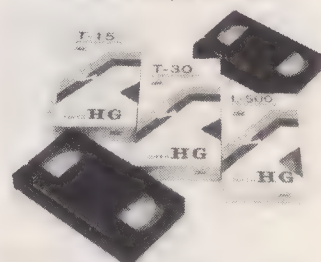
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TECH TIPS

Call off the search

When using a VHS VCR, it's best to avoid using the rewind search feature. This reverses the direction of the tape against the rotating head drum, thus accelerating wear of the heads and the tape. Fast-forward search is easier on the system, because the tape moves in the same direction that the head drum turns.

Doug Parran
Bowie, Md.

Zoom in on displays

If you keep your VCR in a cart with glass doors, there's a simple accessory that can make the deck's front-panel display more visible. Drop by an auto parts store and pick up one of those plastic magnifying stickers for use on the rear windows of long vehicles. Place the sticker on the cart door glass in front of the VCR's display. Push the VCR back or slide it forward to adjust the view.

Ted P. Cantrell
Yelm, Wash.

Taping the time

If you miss an episode of a series you're taping, you may want to leave that space vacant on the tape so that you can record the episode when it is rerun. In place of the program, record the cable channel which displays the time. This gives you a marker, so you can easily position the tape at the right spot later.

Jim Gray
Atlanta, Ga.

Nullify the noise

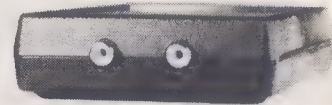
Most camcorders have fixed microphones that can't be removed or turned off. But when taping slides or using macro focus, you may want to mute unwanted ambient sounds. You can turn off the microphone by inserting a mini plug in the external microphone jack on the camcorder. The plugs can be purchased at electronics supply stores.

Henry N. Perella
Providence, R.I.

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At VIDEO Magazine, we believe our readers should get what they order from our mail-order advertisers at the prices indicated and in a timely fashion. We stand behind that belief by taking steps to determine that an advertiser is reputable and reliable before accepting an advertisement. Additionally, if we learn that an advertiser engages in a regular pattern of unfair or improper business practices, we will deny that advertiser the opportunity to advertise.

Nonetheless, the responsibility for fair dealing ultimately lies with the advertisers themselves, and unfortunately VIDEO Magazine cannot guarantee their behavior. Therefore, we feel it is important for our readers to know what their rights are and to follow the tips set forth below for purchasing merchandise by mail. Further, we are prepared to use our best efforts to assist any customer who has been improperly or unfairly dealt with by one of our advertisers.

Our requirements for advertising in VIDEO Magazine and our offer of assistance to aggrieved purchasers do not in any way limit either the obligation of an advertiser to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations or our customers' ability to enforce their rights under those laws.

MAIL-ORDER BILL OF RIGHTS

Under federal law, if you order advertised merchandise by mail, the advertiser must ship your order when promised in the advertisement—or, if no delivery date is promised, within 30 days of receiving your order. If the advertiser fails to ship your order in a timely fashion, you may cancel your order and are entitled to a prompt refund.

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4. Check whether the advertiser has a return policy.
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7. If you receive damaged or improper merchandise, contact the advertiser as soon as possible.
8. Get a receipt from the shipper whenever you return merchandise.
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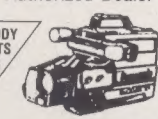
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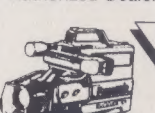
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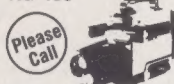
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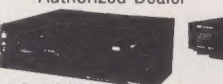
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OFF THE AIR

They shoot televisions, don't they?

BY STAN PINKWAS

High-definition television is on the way. Scientists say it, CEOs say it, the press predicts it. But what if HDTV were no more than a grand illusion, a technology sliding toward the trash heap of history at the moment of its most perfect expression? What if it were to prove no more durable than the Edsel, the dirigible or CED? What would take its place?

The answer, argues a provocative new book by economist George Gilder, is powerful computers designed to receive digital TV broadcasts through a nationwide network of fiber-optic transmission cables. Moreover, it will be U.S. companies that deliver the *coup de grace* to conventional TV.

"Television is dead," Gilder proclaims in *Microcosm: The Quantum Revolution in Economics and Technology*. Television as we know it—with its reliance on analog signals, big picture tubes and weighty power demands—is so nearly archaic, compared to the growing powers of computers, says Gilder, that HDTV will be old news before it can claim its birthright. Even the digital features TV sets now display do little more than delay the final fade of the last vacuum tube in a microchip culture.

At the core of Gilder's game plan is his belief that American computer companies, not traditional TV makers like Zenith, will soon exploit their lead in semiconductor and information technologies to capture tomorrow's market for advanced television products. Computers, says Gilder, can already deliver more information more quickly than analog televisions will ever be able to. Once they're perfected, computer TV pictures will be digital, crystal clear, interference free and interactive.

Gilder acknowledges that this transformation faces a formidable barrier: the memory loads and processing speed needed to generate real-time color video on a computer terminal are fearfully expensive. A fully digital monitor would cost thousands of dollars at today's

prices. But Gilder expects these prices to sink rapidly, while computing power grows by leaps and bytes.

The components to make this a reality are already being developed by Apple, IBM, Sun, Next, Texas Instruments and "scores of others," asserts Gilder. As an example, he cites research by the Intel Corporation into the digital video interactive (DVI) format. Gilder predicts this digital compression technology will soon make it possible to stuff a feature-length movie onto a single CD.

A further hurdle—the frequency spectrum's lack of space for digital TV

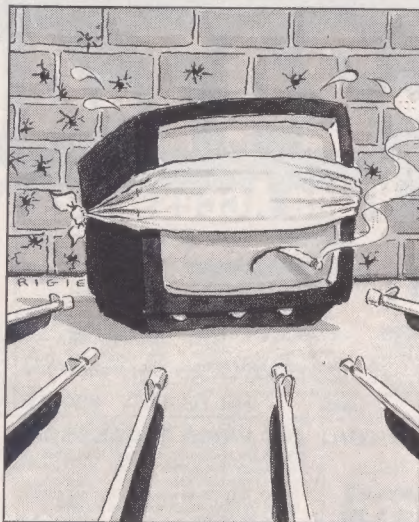
that technology will continue to make life better, that American ingenuity will triumph over foreign competition and that the national economy will benefit.

The flaw in Gilder's videotopia is time: There's not enough of it. Sure, computer power is improving, but not at the warp-speed needed to flood the nation's living rooms by the decade's end. Nor is a full-scale fiber highway just around the corner, a status Gilder acknowledges by calling on the FCC to withdraw spectrum space from analog TV broadcasters as a way of aiding telephone companies.

Technological sea changes have routinely needed a generation or more to reach critical mass—and be transformed into objects desired by millions of consumers. The telephone, black & white television, color television, cellular phones, even today's trendy fax machine, all endured lengthy germinations before they flowered.

Moreover, if firms like Intel and Apple aggressively try to peddle computerized TV sets, does even Gilder really expect enterprises like Sony, Matsushita and Thomson to watch their businesses wither without fighting back? Such companies are already seeing to it that much of conventional television is quickly becoming less so. HDTV represents the leading edge of this process. But projects, many depending on aspects of computer technology, are underway to give non-HDTV sets brighter colors, clearer images, flatter surfaces, fewer ghosts, larger feature menus, more dimensional audio, multi-picture options, trendier designs and compatibility with a wider variety of components, including computers.

Solid-state computer TV sets are not suddenly about to overthrow the system used in 100 million homes, or bypass the forces engaged in refining it. Gilder is right in pointing out that computer firms, as opposed to traditional TV makers, can bring a lot to the party—and should. But the real news is that television, far from dying, is on a technological roll. And we all have a box seat.



broadcasts—prompts Gilder to recommend putting the U.S. on a strict fiber diet. Forget about over-the-air digi-casting. The Federal Communications Commission should deregulate the phone companies and help them swaddle the nation's 100 million households in glass cocoons. With fiber optics paving the way, Gilder sees little to stop computers from outracing HDTV.

His pitch has the seductive power that comes from saying things we want to hear: Not only can we have better TV sets than we thought possible sooner than we thought possible, but American companies will do the job. All this speaks directly to powerfully held beliefs

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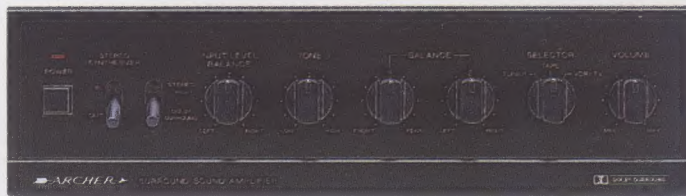


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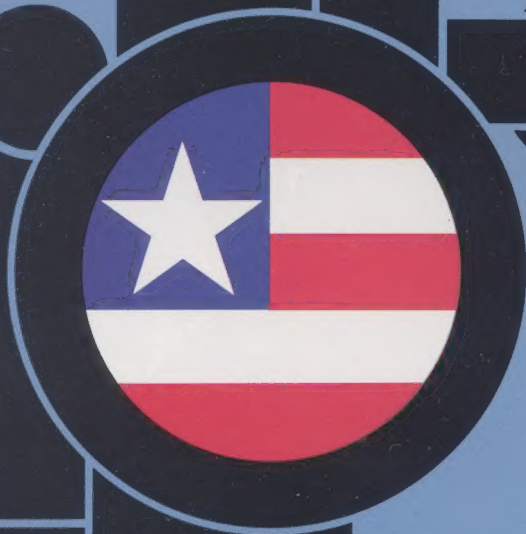
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